

# **The Music of Tōru Takemitsu:**

**influences, confluences and status**

by

**Peter Burt**

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## Abstract

The late Tōru Takemitsu (1930-1996) achieved international recognition as the foremost Japanese composer of the post-war period, and was also credited with effecting a more successful synthesis of Eastern and Western elements in his music than preceding generations of Japanese composers. Close analysis of his music does indeed reveal a co-existence of technical and æsthetic preoccupations derived from both traditions, but the type of accommodation favoured by Takemitsu differs in important respects from that attempted by his forebears, and this, it will be argued, fully vindicates the claims advanced for the superiority of Takemitsu's achievement.

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## **Part I**

### **Preliminary**

# Chapter I

## Introduction

The generous tributes to the late Tōru Takemitsu which appeared in the obituary columns of the world's press as this thesis was being written are an eloquent testimony to the esteemed position the composer occupied in the generation of Japanese composers to which he belonged. The *Times* spoke of him as 'for more than three decades...the leader of a new music in Japan'; Julian Anderson, writing in the *Independent*, referred to him as 'one of the most distinguished cultural figures to have emerged from East Asia since the Second World War, and also one of the most played contemporary composers anywhere in the world'; while, elsewhere in Europe, *Le Monde* accorded Takemitsu the posthumous title of '*chef de file de la musique contemporaine japonaise*.' Sentiments such as these were not simply conventional responses to the death of a great musician, but echoed the general consensus on the composer's achievement during his lifetime: the literature on the composer, both scholarly and ephemeral, abounds with phrases such as 'the pre-eminent Japanese composer'<sup>1</sup> and 'his country's most distinguished composer in the second half of the twentieth century.'<sup>2</sup> In addition to such eulogistic assessments of the composer's importance in general, one frequently comes across a rather more specific claim; namely, that the composer achieved particular success in integrating elements of his own Japanese tradition into a modern Western composing style. Thus, for example, one Japanese commentator writes that:

'Contemporary Japanese composer Tōru Takemitsu has made his life's work the creation of a "universal music" through the fusion of Japanese and Western elements in his compositions, incorporating a number of traditional Japanese instruments such as the *biwa* and *shakuhachi*.'<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Koozin, Timothy: 'Octatonicism in Recent Piano Works of Tōru Takemitsu.' 'Perspectives of New Music', Vol. 29 Pt. 1 (1991), p. 124

<sup>2</sup> Takemitsu, Tōru: 'Confronting Silence: selected writings', translated and edited by Yoshiko Kakudo and Glenn Glasow (Berkeley, California: Fallen Leaf Press, 1995), translators' preface, p. xiii

<sup>3</sup> Taniyama, Sawako : 'The development of Tōru Takemitsu's musical philosophy', p. 71

Before proceeding any further, it must be admitted, for the sake of intellectual honesty, that the above is by no means a universally accepted opinion of the composer's musical aims. In particular, several close acquaintances of Takemitsu whom the author met in Japan adamantly insisted that the composer had never had any intention of becoming a 'bridge' between East and West, that this was a notion foisted upon him by his commentators. Such an idea does indeed seem to be borne out on occasion by the composer's own words; for example:

'It would not be so difficult to adopt traditional Japanese music into Western music or to blend both. I am not, however, interested in either of these processes.'<sup>4</sup>

At the same time, it must be countered that a composer in Takemitsu's position can, at the very least, hardly be unaware of the æsthetic problem that resides in his particular geographical and historical position; that, indeed, 'it is unavoidable that any Japanese professional musician, who composes or performs in the realm of Western art music, has to confront the problem of how to identify himself as a Japanese.'<sup>5</sup> Takemitsu's own voluminous writings about music in fact suggest that he is not only aware of the problem, but obsessed by it; although his expressed intention may not have been so much to fuse East and West as to 'swim in an ocean that is neither Eastern or Western', his choice of language indicates over and over again that the problem of constructing an appropriate stylistic identity for himself, as Japanese composer writing in a late twentieth-century Western idiom, is always paramount in his mind.

Granted, then, that at the very least a good deal of Takemitsu's energies were devoted to the resolution of this problem, it must also be admitted that he was perceived as having been extremely successful in this pursuit, as comments such as that by Taniyama quoted above indicate. And, in the case of one commentator at least, Takemitsu's success in this particular sphere is further qualified by an invidious comparison with those of the previous generation of Japanese composers who had preceded him in the same endeavour:

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<sup>4</sup> Takemitsu, Tōru, 'A Mirror and an Egg.' *Soundings* 12 (1984-85), p. 4

<sup>5</sup> Ogawa, Masafumi: 'Tōru Takemitsu's compositional techniques and his identity as Japanese in western art music: an analysis of *Kaze no uma* ("Wind Horse")' *Research Bulletin of the Faculty of Education, Oita University*, 13(1) (1991), p. 109

‘Strongly identifying himself both as a Japanese and a composer in the Western sense, Takemitsu projects in his music a maturity of personal expression which transcends the hybrid styles of previous Japanese composers.’<sup>6</sup>

and:

‘Takemitsu’s music transcends earlier efforts to blend Eastern and Western idioms through a subtle balance of opposing features.’<sup>7</sup>

A moment’s reflection on these two statements reveals a problem with such assessments for most Westerners: namely, who precisely are these ‘previous Japanese composers’ whose efforts Takemitsu has so successfully ‘transcended’? For of course, the composers to whom Koozin is obliquely referring are nowadays virtually unknown outside Japan. To the modern Western listener, accustomed to the belief that contemporary Japanese music virtually begins with Tōru Takemitsu (and ends there, in many cases), it comes as a surprise to learn that there exists a whole generation of previous composers whose names have been largely forgotten, some of whom achieved considerable international celebrity in the pre-war years. The very fact that they *have* been forgotten, of course, might be seen as evidence of the ultimate failure of their efforts at ‘hybridization’; but it does not answer the question of the precise manner of their failure. And so an ‘epic question’ begins to take shape, the provision of an answer for which will be the main motivating force behind the whole discussion of Takemitsu’s music which follows: namely, what precisely are the musical features which contribute to Takemitsu’s highly personal idiom, and in what sense could they be said to relate to aspects of Eastern and Western tradition in such a manner as to effect a more satisfactory resolution of the problems inherent in the Japanese composer’s situation than had hitherto been achieved?

An attempt to answer this question will of necessity afford an opportunity for a detailed investigation of the musical techniques the composer habitually employs, and Part II of the thesis, which will form the bulk of the text, is concerned with

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<sup>6</sup> Koozin, Timothy: ‘The Solo Piano Works of Tōru Takemitsu: a linear/set-theoretical analysis’ (Ph.D dissertation, University of Cincinnati, 1988), p. 295

<sup>7</sup> Koozin, Timothy: ‘Tōru Takemitsu and the Unity of Opposites.’ *College Music Symposium*, 1990 (Spring), Vol. XXX Pt. 1, p. 34



these questions. In Part III, an attempt will be made to form conclusions on the basis of these findings, and to provide some possible answers to the essential question. In order to see Takemitsu in relation to the development of Western-style composition in Japan as a whole, however, it will be necessary first to provide some historical details on the manner in which Japan came to assimilate Western musical culture, some biographical details on the manner in which Takemitsu came to take his place within that tradition, and some musical details on the manner in which his style evolved as part of the ongoing development of that tradition. Part I of the thesis is devoted to a discussion of these matters, beginning with the historical perspective.

## 1.1 Historical: How Western music came to Japan

If one were obliged to select one date in the modern history of Japan that holds as portentous a significance for the people of that nation as 1066 does for the inhabitants of the United Kingdom, or 1776 for those of the United States, then there could be few more appropriate candidates for selection than the 8th. July 1853 – the day when, as Stephen Sondheim expresses it in his *Pacific Overtures*:

*‘...there came, Breaking through the Mist, Roaring through the sea,*

*Four black dragons, spitting fire....*

*And the earth trembled, And the sky cracked,*

*And I thought it was the end of the world!’<sup>8</sup>*

The event dramatised by Sondheim here is the appearance of Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry of the United States Navy in Uraga harbour with his ‘black ships’; and to understand why such an event might have seemed to signal the end of the world to a contemporary Japanese observer, one has to travel back a quarter of a millenium, to the accession in 1603 of Ieyasu Tokugawa to the title of military dictator of all Japan, or *shōgun*. The Tokugawa family had achieved this sovereign power over the whole country by reducing to submission the powerful regional warlords, or *daimyō*, and took steps to consolidate their position by requiring the *daimyō* to spend part of each year in Edo (Tōkyō), and to leave their

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<sup>8</sup> Sondheim, Stephen: ‘Pacific Overtures’ (Libretto) (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1977), p. 23

families as hostages in the city when they returned to the provinces. But despite such measures, they still feared the usurpation of the fragile centralised power they had established; in particular, they feared the possible colonial ambitions of the Europeans resident in the country, as well as the threat of alliances between these foreign powers and the subordinate *daimyō*. Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch and English nationals were all present in Japan at the time, and in their competition for trade privileges, each was keen to present as negative a view as possible of the expansionist aims of their rivals. The result of such manoeuvres, of course, was a deep-seated suspicion of foreigners as a whole, and nowhere was this newly-found atmosphere of xenophobia more keenly felt than amongst the Christian community that had grown up in Japan since the arrival of the Jesuit missionary Francis Xavier in 1549. Edicts against the Christian religion were issued in 1614, 1616 and 1624, resulting in the martyrdom of thousands of professors of the faith; as an additional measure in the last-named year, all Spaniards were expelled from the country and the Japanese themselves forbidden to travel abroad. Expulsion of the Portuguese followed in 1638, and since the English trading station had closed in 1623, by 1640 no foreigners remained in Japan except the small ghetto of Dutch traders confined to the artificial island of Deshima in Nagasaki harbour. Japan, allowing its subjects no egress and outsiders no ingress, had turned itself into a 'hermit kingdom', and was to maintain its exclusion policy virtually intact until the arrival of Commodore Perry's ships 250 years later.

'Virtually' intact perhaps, but not absolutely so; Japan's isolation did not remain entirely inviolate during the Tokugawa shōgunate, despite the severe penalties that those who broke the prohibition were liable to incur. From the end of the eighteenth century onwards, Russian, American, British, French and Dutch seafarers all made efforts to persuade the Japanese to open their country to foreign trade. And, while actual contact with outsiders was virtually impossible, there were nevertheless channels through which news about developments in the outside world could reach the country's intelligentsia; at first in clandestine fashion, via Chinese and Dutch traders, and then more openly, after the shōgun Yoshimune (1716-1745) lifted the ban on the importation of foreign books (provided they contained no reference to Christian teaching) in 1720. This paved the way for the foundation of the group known as the *rangakusha* or 'Dutch scholars', whose

painstaking efforts at translating works in that language resulted in the appearance of the first European work to be published in Japan, an anatomy book, in 1774. Significantly, besides medicine, the other aspect of Western development about which the Japanese were especially curious, and in which they saw their own backwardness as potentially disastrous, was military science: Takashima Shūhan (1798-1866), who learned about Western ordnance from textbooks, wrote to the governor of Nagasaki after the British success in the Anglo-Chinese war to warn that 'Japan was no more capable of resistance than China, and Chinese defensive measures had been "like child's play" '.<sup>9</sup> For 'modernisers' such as Shūhan, the necessity for Japan to acquire mastery of Western learning was no longer a matter of scholarly curiosity, but of the country's very survival.

However, the developments which finally were perhaps most instrumental in bringing about the collapse of Japan's self-imposed isolation were taking place in a rather more mundane sphere than this: that of economics. The Tokugawa period saw the emergence of a rising mercantile class in the cities, and of coin rather than rice as the favoured medium of exchange through which they conducted their business. The feudal military class (*samurai*), who received payment in rice from their peasant subjects, contracted huge debts to the merchants which they attempted to displace onto the already overstretched farmers; as a result, the agricultural economy broke down and 'was replaced by a mercantile economy which Japan was unable to support without calling on the outside world...What opened the doors was not a summons from without but an explosion from within'<sup>10</sup>

Quite apart from the question of the Americans' superior military strength, therefore, capitulation to Perry's demand for trading opportunities was by now a matter of economic inevitability: as Samson puts it, 'The history of [the government's] tergiversation becomes more intelligible if the emptiness of their treasury is taken into account.'<sup>11</sup> Commodore Perry returned in February 1854 with an augmented force and successfully concluded a trade agreement; similar treaties were signed with the British in the same year, and with the Russians and Dutch in the following year. Thereafter, events moved inexorably to bring about the

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<sup>9</sup> Sansom, G.B.: 'The Western World and Japan' (London: Cresset Press, 1950), p. 264

<sup>10</sup> Sansom, G.B.: 'Japan: a short cultural history' (Rutland, Vermont: Tuttle, 1979), pp. 468, 471

<sup>11</sup> 'The Western World and Japan', p. 303

downfall of the ruling military dictatorship (*bakufu*), although the force that dealt it the final blow came from a somewhat unexpected quarter. For in the end it was forces loyal to the Emperor, who had served a mere puppet function under the shōgunate, which brought about the resignation of the last *shōgun* in 1867 and, after a brief civil war, the formation of a provisional government and restoration of the Emperor to his former power in 1868 (the so-called 'Meiji Restoration.') Thus, paradoxically, the foundations of Western-style government in Japan were prepared by those very elements who had initially viewed the *bakufu*'s accommodation with foreigners as a betrayal, and whose motto had been '*Sonno jōi*' – 'Revere the Emperor and expel the barbarians!'

According to the historian Arnold Toynbee, there are 'two alternative responses which may be evoked in a society which has been thrown on the defensive by the impact of an alien force in superior strength.'<sup>12</sup> The first of these Toynbee characterises as the 'Herodian' position:<sup>13</sup>

'The "Herodian" is the man who acts on the principle that the most effective way to guard against the danger of the unknown is to master its secret; and, when he finds himself in the predicament of being confronted by a more highly skilled and better armed opponent, he responds by discarding his traditional art of war and learning to fight his enemy with the enemy's own tactics and own weapons.'<sup>14</sup>

As the opposite category to this 'Herodian' response, Toynbee posits the idea of 'Zealotism':

'The "Zealot" is the man who takes refuge from the unknown in the familiar; and when he joins battle with a stranger who practises superior tactics and enjoys formidable new-fangled weapons...responds by practising his own traditional art of war with abnormally scrupulous exactitude.'<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Toynbee, Arnold J.: 'Civilization on Trial' (Oxford: OUP, 1948), p. 194

<sup>13</sup> After 'Herod the Great, the Edomite King of Judaea'; cf. Toynbee, Arnold J.: 'The World and the West' (London: OUP, 1952), p. 87

<sup>14</sup> 'Civilization on Trial', p. 193

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., p. 188

For Toynbee, the reaction of the nineteenth-century Japanese to their dramatic exposure to Western technological prowess constituted the 'Herodian' response *par excellence*: the Japanese are for him, 'of all the non-Western peoples that the modern West has challenged...perhaps the least unsuccessful exponents of "Herodianism" in the world so far.'<sup>16</sup> As the anxieties of such men as Takashima Shūhan, to which attention has been drawn above, have already shown, the Japanese themselves were well aware that 'if they hesitated to adopt this alien Western technology now, they would immediately become a prey to Western conquerors and Western weapons to which they would then have no retort.'<sup>17</sup> But for many Japanese, the adoption of Western culture and habits went far beyond the minimum necessary to acquire adequate military competence:

'Very soon Japanese diplomats vied with each other to appear at the soirées of the European Diplomatic Corps in the most fashionable European dress, dancing to European music minuets and waltzes...and speaking French. Soon the progressive middle classes tried to imitate this zest for europeanisation. They wore kimonos with European shoes and bowler hats, smoked big cigars, and sang "Home Sweet Home" in English in the street.'<sup>18</sup>

There were even calls for the abolition of the Japanese language altogether during those heady days. Such extremist 'Herodianism' invites suspicions of an underlying instability in the collective psyche of this period, and Samson has suggested that 'it was in part a sense of inferiority which impelled the Japanese to take enthusiastically to foreign ways.'<sup>19</sup> The leading authority on Japanese traditional music goes further, suggesting that Western culture was 'accepted as a necessity but its donors were disliked'<sup>20</sup>; and such statements suggest that Toynbee's implication of a simple, wholehearted 'Herodian' conversion needs some qualification. As Samson notes, the very zeal with which Western ideas were embraced, 'soured and curdled by disappointment,...produced the strong anti-foreign reaction which followed'<sup>21</sup>, and much of the subsequent history of Japan revolved around the di-

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p. 195

<sup>17</sup> 'The World and the West', p. 56

<sup>18</sup> Yoshida, Takatoshi: 'How Western Music Came to Japan'; *Tempo* 40 (Summer 1956), pp. 16-17

<sup>19</sup> 'The Western World and Japan', p. 307

<sup>20</sup> Harich-Schneider, Eta: 'A History of Japanese Music' (London: OUP, 1973), p. 545

<sup>21</sup> Samson, G.B., op. cit., loc. cit.

alectic between Westernisation on the one hand, and regression to Nationalistic impulse on the other: between Herodianism and the attitude of ‘the “Zealot” when, with spear and shield, he charges a machine-gun’<sup>22</sup> And this same tension of opposing forces expressed itself not only, so to speak, diachronically, in terms of the ideological fluctuations of Japanese history, but also synchronically, as a basic and ongoing schism in the Japanese psyche; what has been described as ‘a kind of double structure or perhaps parallelism of lifestyle and intellectual attitude of the modern Japanese’<sup>23</sup>, whereby European manners hold sway to a certain degree in areas of ‘public’ life, while in the private sphere people tend ‘consciously or unconsciously to maintain the traditions passed on from generation to generation.’<sup>24</sup> This interplay of forces – not always of necessity a destructive one – has been of crucial importance in shaping the development of Japanese culture in the modern period; and it is important to bear it in mind through the discussion of the history of Japanese music to which attention will shortly be turned.

It is not strictly true that the Japanese were wholly ignorant of Western music prior to the mid-nineteenth century; thanks to the offices of Western missionaries in the late sixteenth century, the ‘basic elements of Western vocal and instrumental music were familiar to at least one fifth of the population of Japan’<sup>25</sup> during that period, and Western devotional music was introduced again after the ban on Christianity was rescinded in 1872. But the strongest impetus towards the importation of European-style music in the early Meiji years was a by-product of ‘Herodianism’ in that sphere where its necessity was felt to be most urgent, the creation of a modern fighting force; for military training on Western lines required Western-style martial music. Initially this took the form of fife-and-drum bands known as *kotekitai*, but in September, 1869 the band of the Satsuma clan were loaned instruments and given instruction by the British bandmaster John William Fenton, giving rise to the first true military band in Japan. Besides their proper function within the armed forces, these bands also provided music for ceremonial

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<sup>22</sup> ‘Civilization on Trial’, p. 195. This, incidentally, is precisely the attitude of the fanatical schoolboy patriots in Yukio Mishima’s famous short story *Runaway Horses*.

<sup>23</sup> Yoshida, Hidekazu: ‘Über die Musikentwicklung Japans in den letzten hundert Jahren.’ In: ‘Aspekte der Neuen Musik (Professor Hans Heinz Stuckenschmidt zum 65. Geburtstag)’ (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1968), p. 98

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Koozin (1988), p. 6

and diplomatic occasions, disseminating their music to a wider audience; to the extent that 'until about 1879...musical activity was organised around the military band, and it was the band that pioneered the way in what today we would call the public concert.'<sup>26</sup>

In addition to dissemination via missionaries after the lifting of the ban on Christian worship, and the activities of the military bands, there was a third force at work in the promotion of Western music; and, once again, its cultivation was a by-product of a larger ideal of 'Herodian' modernisation, this time in the sphere of education. But whereas the inclusion of music in the programme of military improvement had been a practical necessity, the provision for musical instruction at elementary and middle-school level set out in the regulations of the Ministry of Education in 1872 was not simply an *unnecessary luxury*, but *one for* which the facilities were totally lacking: its appearance on the syllabus was simply the result of a wholesale imitation of Western curricula. 'For this practice to be imitated without modification was an act symptomatic of the progressiveness of the authorities, who had received the baptism of the new spirit of the Reformation.'<sup>27</sup>

The key figure in the attempt to realise the Education Ministry's ambitious aspirations during these pioneer years was Shūji Izawa (1851-1917), who in 1875 was ordered to go to the United States to study music under Luther Whiting Mason (1828-1896) and to examine American educational methods. On his return to Japan, the 'Music Study Committee' (effectively a small music college) was set up at his recommendation; and, in the same month (Oct. 1879), he submitted his 'Plan for the Study of Music.' Here for the first time one begins to detect a counter-movement against uncritical Westernisation of Japanese music education; but Izawa was too much of a realist to relapse into mere 'Zealotism'. Instead he spells out his hopes for attaining what was to prove the Holy Grail after which so many Japanese musicians were subsequently to strive: the resolution, at least in the sphere of music, of the 'double-structure' in the Japanese psyche; the synthesis of European and Japanese musics into a unity.

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<sup>26</sup> Kōichi, Nomura: 'Occidental Music', Part Seven of 'Japanese Music and Drama in the Meiji Era', compiled and edited by Komiya Toyotaka, translated and adapted by Edward G. Seidensticker (Tōkyō: Ōbunsha, 1956), p. 456

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p. 460

In retrospect, Izawa's suggested methods for achieving this goal seem almost touchingly naïve; he came to the conclusion that it is only in their advanced forms that Eastern and Western musics diverge, whereas their basic elements – as found in children's songs – are 'strikingly similar.' By combining Eastern and Western children's songs to produce music for use in elementary school, therefore, Izawa believed it would be possible 'by blending Eastern and Western music [to] establish a new kind of music which is suitable for the Japan of today.'<sup>28</sup> In practical terms, however, the fruits of this first desire for a musical 'fusion' of East and West appear simply to have involved the transcription into Western notation and (presumably inappropriate) 'harmonisation' of Japanese and Japanese-style melodies, in a manner that sounds all too familiar to those acquainted with the folk-song 'arrangements' popular in the West at the same period. Furthermore, as the years passed, the attempt to study traditional Japanese music alongside European music was gradually abandoned, and only resumed again after the Second World War. Nevertheless, Izawa's document is of considerable historical importance in recording the first expression by a Japanese musician of the hope of synthesising Eastern and Western musical cultures – a dream which has remained the elusive goal of countless Japanese musicians ever since, right up to Takemitsu's longing to hatch what he calls his 'universal egg' of global music in our own day.<sup>29</sup>

Music education in these early years was primarily preoccupied with the acquisition of excellence in performance; although the first Western-style composition of the Meiji era, a violin sonata, was produced by Nobuko Kōda (1870-1946) as early as 1897<sup>30</sup>, and the first Japanese vocal piece, *Kōjō no Tsuki* by Rentarō Taki (1879-1903), appeared in 1900, the figure normally regarded as the pioneer of Japanese composition, Kōsaku Yamada (1886-1965) did not emerge until the early years of the following century, and even he originally graduated as a singer from the Tōkyō Music School (which the 'Music Study Committee' had become

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 466. Kōichi's work contains a translation of the complete text of Izawa's study plan (p. 464ff.)

<sup>29</sup> The phrase apparently originates from Buckminster Fuller; cf. Takemitsu, trnsl. Kakudo and Glasow, op. cit., p. 91: 'There is no doubt, as Buckminster Fuller has pointed out, that from the early twentieth century...the various countries and cultures of the world have begun a journey toward the geographic and historic unity of peoples. And now all of us, individually and collectively, share in incubating that vast universal cultural egg.'

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Judith Ann Herd, in: 'The Neonationalist Movement: origins of Japanese contemporary music' ('Perspectives of New Music' XVII/2 (summer 1989)), p. 118



in 1887). Japanese education in Western music at this period was very much dominated by the Germanic tradition – with the exception of the conductor Noël Péri, all the teachers at the Tōkyō School were of German extraction – resulting in ‘the Japanese tending to think of the German traditions as the only ones.’<sup>31</sup> Hence it is little surprise to find Yamada travelling to Berlin in 1906 to study for two years with Max Bruch, and concentrating his compositional efforts on the creation of *Lieder*. Despite such wholesale imitation of Germanic models, however, the subject-matter at least of the operas for which Yamada later became famous betrays an interest in indigenous themes – most notably in his greatest success, *Kurobune* (‘Black Ships’), which tells the story of Commodore Perry’s arrival, and which Eta Harich-Schneider has neatly described as ‘a Puccini opera from the Eastern standpoint.’<sup>32</sup>

In Yamada’s imitative appropriation of the Germanic tradition, one begins to perceive what Toynbee calls an ‘inherent weakness’ of the ‘Herodian’ strategy: the fact ‘that “Herodianism” is, *ex hypothesi*, mimetic and not creative, so that, even if it succeeds, it is apt simply to enlarge the ... products of the imitated society instead of releasing new creative energies in human souls.’<sup>33</sup> This is of course a familiar Western criticism of the modern Japanese; and, in the case of a figure like Yamada, the Western critic finds further grounds for reservation in the fact that the initial mimesis is compounded by subsequent replication. This can result from the tendency of Japanese musicians to form groups ‘representing the Western country where they have studied and the composing style fashionable at the time of their studies’<sup>34</sup>; or it may be due to the conservative, Confucian pedagogic method whereby the received tradition is handed down from revered teacher to reverent pupil (or even, in several cases, from father to son), with the result that the term ‘school of composition’ is much more strictly applicable in Japan than it is in the West. By whatever means it came about, one finds the example of Yamada followed by a number of other *Lieder* composers: Ryutarō Hirota (1892-1952), Shinpei Nakahama (1887-1952), Nagayo Moto’ori (1885-1945). Similarly, when Saburo Moroi (1903-1977) returned from his period of study in Germany

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<sup>31</sup> Kōichi, op. cit., p. 493

<sup>32</sup> Harich-Schneider, op. cit., p. 544

<sup>33</sup> Toynbee, ‘Civilization on Trial’, p. 198

<sup>34</sup> Harich-Schneider, op. cit., p. 548

(1934-36) equipped with a newly-found proficiency in instrumental music, a school of Japanese composers in this hitherto neglected medium sprang up, again with a strongly Teutonic bent: Yoshino Irino (1921-1980), Minao Shibata (1916-1996), Makoto Moroi (1930- ).

Despite the continuing hegemony of the Austro-German tradition, by the early years of the twentieth century a second European tradition was beginning to make its mark on Japanese composition, that of France. The key figure in this field, Tomojirō Ikenouchi (1906-1991) was the first Japanese to enter the Paris Conservatoire, where he studied from 1927 to 1936 under Paul Henri Büsser (1873-1972); his pupils included Saburō Takata (1913- ), Akira Miyoshi (1933- ), Akio Yashiro (1929-1976) and Toshirō Mayuzumi (1929-1997). The importation of the musical language of Debussy and Ravel into Japan which followed as a result of such influence offered an important new means of forging links between East and West for Japanese composers: both in terms of a general affinity of æsthetic outlook (the 'Impressionistic' ethos finding its echo in the Japanese fondness for pictorial, naturalistic subjects, and both traditions sharing a predilection for timbral finesse), and in musical technique (the scale-based harmonic idiom, which could equally well be adapted to the indigenous scales of Japanese music, and may indeed originally have derived from the French composers' own exposure to oriental musics.) As Chung-Haing Lee notes, the Japanese 'discovered that the non-functional harmonies and modal melodies inherent in French Impressionism allowed for a conveyance of uninhibited sound while still utilizing Western compositional techniques.'<sup>35</sup>

Although in their apparent subordination to foreign influence the 'German' and 'French' schools described above may appear to represent manifestations of the most complete 'Herodianism' in Japanese composition, one finds examples even here of a counteracting nationalist tendency trying to assert itself: the 'Germanic' Makoto Moroi and the 'Francophile' Ikenouchi both, for instance, attempting to introduce 'Japanese' elements into their writing. Alongside these two schools, however, Japanese music criticism has traditionally recognised a third force in twentieth-century composition, and it is in this 'Nationalist' school that we find the 'Zealotist' reaction against foreign influence expressing itself most forcibly.

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<sup>35</sup> Lee, Chung-Haing: 'Japanese Elements in the Piano Music of Tōru Takemitsu' (DMA Thesis, University of North Texas, 1991), p. 5

Whether this æsthetic stance corresponded to a political attitude on the part of composers or not, its flowering certainly coincided with that period of Japanese history immediately preceding the Second World War, when, as in Nazi Germany, ‘alien’ culture was demonised and the ‘native’ patriotically championed:

‘The Japanese government began to control all cultural education in public schools in the early 1930s, and books and records in public libraries were heavily censored. By 1937, the government considered music an essential tool for the transmission of state propaganda and took control of the popular music industry.’<sup>36</sup>

Herd attributes the emergence of the pre-war Nationalist school to ‘the isolationist policies of the Japanese government and [the composers’] own frustrations with learning by rote’<sup>37</sup> rather than to any overt political ‘Zealotism’ on the part of its members. The latter included Akira Ifukube (1914- ), Fumio Hayasaka (1914-1955), Shūkichi Mitsukuri (1895-1971), Yoritsune Matsudaira (1907- ) and the composer usually cited as Takemitsu’s only formal teacher, Yasuji Kiyose (1899-1981), the last three of whom formed the ‘Association of Young Composers’ in 1930 (later to become the Japanese branch of the ISCM.) The composers of this school sought new solutions to the age-old problem of forging an effective synthesis of Eastern and Western traditions: Ifukube, for example, produced ‘complicated polymetres and instrumental combinations learned from years of listening to Ainu melodies in Hokkaidō’<sup>38</sup>, while Mitsukuri, who was awarded an ISCM prize for his *Bashō’s Journey* in 1950, made a scientific study of the elements of traditional music, deriving a theory based on the interval of the fifth. As such researches suggest, these composers ‘worked with folk-music and folklore in the same manner as the Hungarian composer Béla Bartók’<sup>39</sup>; however, despite the international recognition which such music clearly enjoyed in the pre-war years, the music of these composers is virtually unknown today outside Japan, and this particular experiment in East-West hybridization clearly did not prove to have lasting value for subsequent generations. In fact, in the subjective opinion of the present writer,

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<sup>36</sup> Herd, op. cit., p. 157, n.3

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., p. 119

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Ueno, Akira: ‘Zwischen den Ufern: die Beziehung zwischen Tradition und zeitgenössischer Musik in Japan’, *MusikTexte* 59 (June 1995), pp. 44-48

the extent of its failure is often audible enough to a modern listener: listening for example to some of the orchestral music of Ifukube, with its relentless reiteration of folk melodies against a static, drone-like harmonic background, the modern Western ear is reminded rather of something like the sort of cliché movie music that used to be used for scenes involving the bombardment of Pearl Harbour. The precise æsthetic reasons for this ‘failure’, however, are a matter of which discussion will for the moment be postponed, to be dealt with at greater length when the time comes to consider the complementary reasons for Takemitsu’s relative ‘success’ in this goal in the conclusion of this thesis.

The outbreak of the Second World War brought about an abrupt end to the ascendancy of this new generation of composers; and, in the desolation of its aftermath, there was little opportunity for formal teaching or studying of music. While, as Herd points out in her article on the subject, a ‘Neonationalist’ movement did eventually arise out of the ashes, the younger generation in particular wished to distance themselves from anything associated with the discredited pre-war tradition, and ‘diligently tried to rid themselves of the wartime stigma of existing nationalistic models’<sup>40</sup> – a process in which they were aided by the policy of the Occupation forces, which strictly limited outward displays of nationalism, while affording ample opportunities of access to new styles currently enjoying vogue in Europe and the United States. Like their counterparts in Germany, the post-war generation of Japanese composers by and large wanted to return to a *Nullstunde* and start from scratch, and found themselves in a peculiar affinity with the post-Webernian European composers’ desire for a new ‘international’ music. It was in this cultural climate that the young Takemitsu began his first efforts at composition, and to continue the story further, it will be necessary to revert from the generalised to the particular, and to trace the rôle played in the ongoing history of Japan’s relationship with the cultures of the West by this one individual.

## 1.2 Biographical: Life of Tōru Takemitsu

Tōru Takemitsu was born the son of Takeo and Raiko Takemitsu on 8th. October, 1930 in the Hongō district of Tōkyō. A month after his birth, he and his mother migrated to the town of Dalian (Luda), in the north-eastern region of China

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., p. 119

then known as Manchuria (and administered at that time as a Japanese colony), where his father worked for an insurance company. Here Takemitsu remained until his seventh year, when he returned to Tōkyō alone in order to begin his primary schooling, staying at his uncle's house in Akebonochō. A year later, his father was forced to follow him on account of illness, dying while under medical care at Kagoshima in 1938.<sup>41</sup>

The Japanese world-view tends to lay greater emphasis on 'nature' as opposed to 'nurture' in the so-called 'Jensen controversy', and it is therefore no surprise to find a Japanese commentator such as Kuniharu Akiyama drawing attention to such possible hereditary sources of Takemitsu's talent as the fact that his father was enormously fond of jazz, was for a while fanatical about the *shakuhachi*, and always won first prize at competitions for making imitation bird noises, for which his reward was a pair of imported Japanese sandals.<sup>42</sup> On the other hand, those who lay greater stress on the importance of environment in determining character might argue that it is rather on account of the fact that his father played his favourite 'Dixieland, New Orleans Style' records so often that Takemitsu was still able in later years to remember names such as 'Kid Ory and his Creole Band' from those days, conceding indeed that 'a little of this jazz music still remains inside me.'<sup>43</sup> They might also point to the fact that the aunt with whom Takemitsu began living on his return to Tōkyō was a teacher of the *koto*<sup>44</sup>; although here it would have to be conceded that, initially at least, the influence appears to have been of a rather negative nature:

'When I was a child I lived in Tōkyō with my aunt, a koto teacher. I heard traditional Japanese music around me all the time. For some reason, it never

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<sup>41</sup> Takemitsu's mother survived until her sudden death in 1983

<sup>42</sup> Akiyama, Kuniharu: biographical sketch of the composer in Takemitsu, Tōru: 'Oto, Chinmoku to Hakariareru Hodo ni' ('Sound, Measuring with Silence') (Tōkyō: Shinchōsha, 1971), p. 211

<sup>43</sup> Ozawa, Seiji and Takemitsu, Tōru: 'Ongaku' (Tōkyō: Shinchōsha, 1981), p. 21 Several of Takemitsu's film scores, e.g. those for *Karami-ai* ('The Inheritance', dir. Masaki Kobayashi, 1962), *Tōkyō Sensō Sengo Hiwa* ('The Man Who Left his Will on Film', dir. Nagisa Ōshima, 1970) and *Natsu no Imōto* ('Summer Sister', dir. Nagisa Ōshima, 1972) testify to the truth of this assertion; there is also a case to be made for a jazz influence on the harmonic suavity of Takemitsu's mature 'concert' music, possibly via the influence of George Russell's celebrated 'Lydian Chromatic' theories (see below, Section 3.1.8.).

<sup>44</sup> A zither-like instrument with thirteen strings, plucked with ivory picks fitted to the player's fingers

really appealed to me, never moved me. Later, hearing traditional classical Japanese music always recalled the bitter memories of the war.’<sup>45</sup>

However one chooses to resolve the question of the relative importance of environmental or genetic factors here, two points emerge clearly from a consideration of Takemitsu’s earliest musical memories. The first is that, by any standards, his childhood environment was decidedly impoverished in the musical opportunities it afforded, and that his claim to be more or less an autodidact remains essentially true, despite the small amount of formal training he later received. The second is that, from an early age, there emerged in his mind a clear dichotomy between Western music such as jazz and traditional Japanese musics, and that his assessment of their relative value was initially decidedly unflattering to the latter.

As the above quotation suggests, this distinction between East and West appears to have been deepened, and indeed polarized, by Takemitsu’s unhappy experiences during the war. One of the composer’s memories in particular neatly and rather poetically encapsulates the division that had by then come about between Japan’s intensely chauvinistic wartime culture and Western music of the kind, ironically enough, that his father had cared about so passionately. With mobilisation in 1944, Takemitsu’s formal education was ended, and he was sent to work at a military provisions base in Saitama prefecture; his lodgings were an underground dugout deep in the mountains, and, in the composer’s own words, ‘the experience was an extremely bitter one.’<sup>46</sup> On one occasion, a newly-graduated officer cadet took a number of the internees into a back room to play them some records on his wind-up gramophone, using a piece of carefully-sharpened bamboo as a needle; one of the first records he played, the composer recalls, was Josephine Baker singing *Parlez-moi de l’amour*. As has already been indicated, music of this sort was regarded in Japan at that period – as in Nazi Germany – as a species of *entartete Kunst*, hence the illicit and clandestine nature of the young officer’s gesture; but for Takemitsu, accustomed as he was to a musical diet consisting solely of patriotic war songs, hearing such music once again was little short of a revelation:

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<sup>45</sup> Takemitsu, Tōru: ‘Contemporary Music in Japan.’ ‘Perspectives of New Music’ XVII/2 (Summer 1989), p. 200

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., p. 199

‘For me, hearing that music came as an enormous shock. I was stunned, and for the first time I suddenly realised the splendid quality of Western music.’<sup>47</sup>

Given the strong positive and negative connotations with which, respectively, Western and Japanese culture had become imbued for him as a result of his wartime experiences, it is hardly surprising that, with the end of hostilities, Takemitsu – in similar fashion to certain of his German contemporaries – adopted a passionately ‘Herodian’ stance of rebellion against all things Japanese, ‘a kind of gut-level response that whatever was Japanese should be rejected’<sup>48</sup>, balanced by a corresponding enthusiasm for all things Western:

‘First of all it could be said that Japan, at the beginning, existed for me only in a negative sense. At least when I came to my decision to understand music (modern Western music), and to live by doing so, Japan was something to be rejected.’<sup>49</sup>

‘Because of World War II, the dislike of things Japanese continued for some time and was not easily wiped out. Indeed, I started out as a composer by denying my “Japaneseness.”’<sup>50</sup>

Above all, of course, Takemitsu’s predilection for the culture of the West included an obsession with Western music: and in those early years of the post-war American occupation the future composer, confined frequently to his sick-bed, was able to spend ‘all my time listening to music on the U.S. Armed Forces Network’<sup>51</sup>, who ‘played various kinds of music (George Gershwin, Debussy, and Mahler)’<sup>52</sup>; he also ‘went very, very frequently to the library of the Civil Information and Ed-

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Takemitsu, quoted in: Kataoka, Hikaru, *Nipponjin to Kansei* (‘The Japanese and Sensitivity’) (Tōkyō: Ongaku no Tomo Sha, 1979), pp. 58-59. Translation by Taniyama, op. cit., p. 73

<sup>49</sup> Takemitsu, Tōru, transl. Sumi Adachi with Roger Reynolds, ‘Mirrors.’ *Perspectives of New Music* XXX/1 (1992), p. 55

<sup>50</sup> Takemitsu, transl. Kakudo and Glasow, op. cit., p. 53

<sup>51</sup> Takemitsu (1989), p. 200

<sup>52</sup> Takemitsu, Tōru, with Cronin, Tania and Tann, Hilary: ‘Afterword’; *Perspectives of New Music* XXVII/2 (Summer 1989), p. 207. The repertory of the radio station also appears to have embraced Messiaen, at least according to one commentator: Kuniharu Akiyama recalls hearing Stokowsky conduct *L’Ascension* around 1948, and applied to the radio station for a copy of the recording to play at a concert of music on disc. See: Kasaba, Eiko: ‘Notes sur la réception de la musique de Messiaen au Japon’ (*Revue Internationale de Musique Française*, no. 30, November 1989), p. 94

ucation branch of the U.S. Occupation government'<sup>53</sup> to seek out American music. This appears to have been the defining moment for Takemitsu: the period in which, aged sixteen, he seems for the first time to have resolved to become a composer.

For the first few years, at least, this ambition was to be pursued without professional guidance or encouragement of any sort – although not entirely in solitude. At the house of Tokuaki Hamada, who conducted a small choral society, Takemitsu met another young composer called Hiroyoshi Suzuki, who appears to have become Takemitsu's comrade-in-arms during these early years of struggle. Together they pored over Rimsky-Korsakov's *Orchestration* and browsed through the scores that were to be found on the shelves of Hamada's home – perhaps significantly, with a predilection for the works of French composers such as Roussel, Fauré and Franck. Shortly afterwards – just before Christmas, 1946 – Takemitsu obtained employment at a 'PX' ('post exchange') attached to the American Army camp in Yokohama, where it was agreed that he could make use of the piano in the otherwise unoccupied hall during the daytime, in return for playing jazz records to the GI's at night. The type of Western music to which Takemitsu had been most consistently exposed during childhood, and which had later become a cherished forbidden fruit, had now ironically become the basis of paid employment.

In the meantime, Takemitsu and Suzuki continued studying whatever scores they could lay hands on, and making their own first experiments in composition. Although the bulk of their studies seems to have been directed towards the work of Western composers, it is interesting to note that, even at this stage – and despite the pejorative associations of traditional Japanese music – they appear to have been making efforts of their own to effect that magic transubstantiation which, as has already been seen, *had been the elusive goal of so many previous* Japanese composers: the realisation of some sort of synthesis of native Japanese and Western musical traditions. For example, they investigated the pentatonic *ryō, ritsu* and *in* scales of traditional Japanese music to see if these could afford serial possibilities – an experiment which seems to have borne fruit of some sort in the shape of such 'serial pentatonic' works as the 17-year old Takemitsu's *Kakehi* (= 'Conduit'!). This implies, of course, that their studies were not limited exclusively to the music of Western composers; and indeed, among the pre-war scores which

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<sup>53</sup> Takemitsu, op. cit., p. 200



the pair combed secondhand bookshops in search of were such things as the Flute Sonatina by Kishio Hirao (1907-1953). This composer appears to have inspired a particular interest in them; at least, he became the object of their first attempt to put their musical studies on a more official footing. For, having resolved to study under Hirao, the two young men attempted to realise their ambition by means of the rather naïve stratagem of calling on him at his house; perhaps unsurprisingly, the unsolicited visitors were turned away at the gate. Six years later, admitted to hospital with a chest disorder, Takemitsu was again to come into contact with Hirao who, as apology for his former *brusquerie*, promised Takemitsu a significant gift: a copy of his forthcoming Japanese translation of Messiaen's *Technique de mon Langage Musical*<sup>54</sup>. Unfortunately, his death soon afterwards prevented him from honouring his promise.

Rather better fortune attended Takemitsu's efforts to apprentice himself to an established composer in the following year (1948). While buying a ticket for a 'Japan-America Contemporary Music Festival' to be held in June, Takemitsu revealed to the business manager of the Tōhō Music Association his own ambition to become a composer. The manager offered to provide him with an introduction to Yasuji Kiyose (1900-1981), and Takemitsu immediately sent him some scores to forward. Later, receiving an invitation to visit the elder composer, he rushed to the latter's home after a performance of his violin sonata, only to find him absent; yet – presumably refusing to be deterred a second time after his unfortunate experience with Hirao – Takemitsu remained waiting like a Zen acolyte until his future teacher returned home late that night. Kiyose then played some of Takemitsu's music at the piano, and, according to the composer, paid him a compliment that seems peculiarly apt in the light of the composer's subsequent association with timbral finesse: 'He told me that the sound was pretty, that I should come another time bringing more scores; and all this was joy to me, spoken as it was by a figure of such respect.'<sup>55</sup> Kiyose himself remembers the younger man telling him that the single use of double-stopping in the second movement of Kiyose's violin sonata had made him shiver, and recalls how surprised he was at the aural sensitivity of this

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<sup>54</sup> Messiaen, Olivier, transl. Hirao, Kishio: 'Waga Ongaku Gohō' (Tōkyō: Kyōiku Shuppan Kabushiki Gaisha, 1954)

<sup>55</sup> Ozawa and Takemitsu, op. cit., p. 139

youth, for whom the manner of writing a single note could be such a source of marvel.

Takemitsu's friend Suzuki was also accepted as a pupil of Kiyose, and later that month, when the 'Japan-America' concert actually took place, the pair were introduced via Kiyose to two other senior figures in the Japanese composing establishment, Yoritsune Matsudaira and Fumio Hayasaka (1914-1955). Two years later, the newcomers were granted the honour of being admitted as members of the elder musicians' composing group, the *Shinsakkyokuha* ('New Composition Group') which, in addition to the three names already cited, also included Kunio Ōtsuki and Akihiro Tsukatani (b. 1919). It was at the seventh recital of the 'Shinsakkyokuha', in December 1950, that the work referred to by Takemitsu and most of his commentators as his compositional *début*, the *Futatsu no Rento* or 'Lento in due movimenti', for piano, was premièred, shortly afterwards to be broadcast by the NHK. The reception accorded to this newcomer by the Japanese critical fraternity appears to have been a cool one, to say the least:

'Takemitsu: But at the time of my early *début* composition, I bought a newspaper in Shinjuku, and when I glanced inside, there was something really harsh written in it.

Ozawa: What was that?

Takemitsu: "*It's not even music*"<sup>56</sup> - that single sentence. That's how it concluded. Everything went totally dark in front of my eyes ... there was a cinema right in front of me, I bought a ticket, went inside, sat alone in a corner of the pitch blackness ... I just wanted to cry, and so I cried, *thinking the best thing for me now would be simply to give up music.*"<sup>57</sup>

Despite such less than enthusiastic reviews, the *Shinsakkyokuha* went on to première Takemitsu's *Yōsei no Kyori* ('Distance de Fée') at its eighth concert in the following year. Yet even before joining the group, Takemitsu had already begun to establish contacts with certain figures outside it, associations that would eventually force both him and Suzuki to resign from it. These figures included the

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<sup>56</sup> '*Ongaku izen de aru*'; literally 'It's "before" or "pre-"music'. Ginji Yamane, in the *Tōto Shinbun*

<sup>57</sup> Ozawa and Takemitsu, op. cit., pp. 144-145

painter Hideko Fukushima, the poet Shūzo Takiguchi, the composer Jōji Yuasa, and the writer and critic Kuniharu Akiyama, the last two of whom Takemitsu had met in the green room on the occasion of his 'début' concert. There appears to have been considerable common ground between all these artists in various media, and in November, 1951, they agreed to form a group to further their artistic aims which, at Takiguchi's suggestion, was christened the 'Experimental Workshop' – *Jikken Kōbō*.<sup>58</sup>

This switch from *Shinsakkyokuha* to *Jikken Kōbō* (Takemitsu and Suzuki withdrew from membership of the former organisation in the following year) was not without significance. The elder composers' association had been a platform for exclusively 'musical' performances; by contrast, the youthful *Jikken Kōbō* was a multi-media organisation with an avowedly 'experimentalist' agenda:

'Using dance, film, "autoslides"<sup>59</sup>, television in a so-called "audio-visual" synthesis of the arts, it is the aim [of the members] that the experimental domain of new art be infinitely expanded.'<sup>60</sup>

Here one is reminded of Morton Feldman's remark about the 'painterly' quality of certain American music, and of the parallel manner in which artists in other media exercised such a powerful influence on the aesthetics of the American 'experimental' school.<sup>61</sup> *Jikken Kōbō*'s first venture, only a month after its foundation, asserted abundantly enough that its ambitious programme of cross-fertilisation between artistic media was not simply empty rhetoric: the ballet *Ikiru Yorokobi* ('The Joy of Living') involved all the members of the group in its production on

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<sup>58</sup> Besides Takemitsu and Suzuki, the original members of *Jikken Kōbō* were: the composers Jōji Yuasa and Takahiro Sonoda; the poet and critic Kuniharu Akiyama; the artists Shōzō Kitajiro, Katsuhiro Yamaguchi, Hideko Fukushima, Tetsurō Komai, Seiji Ōtsuji and Naotsugu Imai; and the stage producer Hideo Yamazaki

<sup>59</sup> The 'ōto suraido' was a contraption devised for *Jikken Kōbō* by the forerunner of the Sony Corporation; pieces of metallic paper, attached to the reverse side of conventional magnetic tape, acted as switches to trigger a change of transparency when the tape was played back through a specially adapted tape recorder, thus enabling a synchronization between 'musique concrète' events and changes of the image projected onto the screen

<sup>60</sup> Shūzo Takiguchi, in 'Geijutsu Shinchō', August 1955

<sup>61</sup> However, in conversation with the author, Mr. Jōji Yuasa, a former member of the group, asserted that the organisation had been founded in complete innocence of these parallel developments in the States; their models had been such earlier, European artistic coteries as the *Bauhaus* and *Blaue Reiter* groupings

Christmas Eve of that year, including Takemitsu who, besides conducting the performance, wrote the score in collaboration with Suzuki over ten sleepless nights, and suffered physical breakdown as a result. Two years later, the appearance of the above-mentioned 'autoslide' technology heralded the emergence of the first truly 'audio-visual' events on *Jikken Kōbō* programmes; at the same time, however, while such events formed the second half of concerts, their opening halves still comprised orthodox, 'serious' presentations of the musical members' compositions, as well as performances of works by other twentieth-century composers. For example, Messiaen's *Eight Preludes*, *Quatuor pour la Fin du Temps* and *Visions de l'Amen* all figured on *Jikken Kōbō* programmes during these early years.<sup>62</sup>

Takemitsu's own compositional activities during these years seem also to have been divided between 'straightforward' instrumental compositions on the one hand, and forays into more experimental areas on the other. To the former category belong such pieces as *Saegirarenai Kyōsoku* ('Uninterrupted Rests') No. 1, premiered at a *Jikken Kōbō* concert in 1952, and *Shitsunaikyōsōkyoku*, his Chamber Concerto (for thirteen winds!), heard for the first time under the same auspices in 1955. By virtue of the simple fact that works such as these exist in the shape of conventionally notated scores, it is music of this kind that has tended to survive from these times, by consequence giving a somewhat false impression of the full nature of Takemitsu's activity during this period. For alongside such works, Takemitsu was already beginning to venture into areas beyond the confines of what may be represented with the symbols of conventional Western notation. One such area was *musique concrète*, which Toshirō Mayuzumi had introduced to Japan upon his return from a period of study in France, with his *XYZ* of 1953. Takemitsu appears first to have used this medium in his music for a radio drama, *Honō* ('Flame') in October, 1955; later, he reworked the music to produce an independent tape work, *Relief Statique*, which was given a public hearing at a *Jikken Kōbō* recital of electronic and *concrète* works in 1956. Other works for the newly-discovered medium appeared in that same year: a triptych of pieces deriving from his incidental music to the Anouilh play 'Eurydice'; *Vocalism A.I.*, based on the sound of the Japanese word for 'love'; *Ki, Kū, Tōri* ('Tree, Sky, Birds'); and *Clap Vocalism*.

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<sup>62</sup> Cf. Kasaba, Eiko, op. cit., p. 95

It was while working on *Relief Statique* in the autumn of 1955 that Takemitsu received the news of the sudden death of the elder Japanese composer and *Shin-sakkyokuha* member Fumio Hayasaka – news which left him ‘stunned.’ Hayasaka is best known in the West (if it all) as the composer who provided music for the early films of Akira Kurosawa such as *Rashōmon* (1950) and *The Seven Samurai* (1954), and Takemitsu had gained invaluable experience of the practicalities of composition and performance working as his assistant. In 1957 he was obliged to take to his sickbed himself, and it was in this condition that he worked on a commission he had received from the Tōkyō Symphony Orchestra, sometimes managing to compose only a single bar, or even half a bar, in the course of a day. The work which eventually emerged as a result of these painstaking efforts, *Requiem for strings*, received its first performance in June of that year, and the comments of the composer at that time certainly give the impression that this intensely elegiac work was intended as a tribute to the late Hayasaka:

‘I did not write this piece grieving over the death of any specific person. However, as I was writing the work, gradually I came to think about Fumio Hayasaka, and mourn his passing.’<sup>63</sup>

In subsequent years, however, Takemitsu was to give a slightly fuller account of the *Requiem*’s genesis, and one which suggests the presence of a second possible dedicatee:

‘At that time especially, being seriously ill, since I finally realised I didn’t know when I myself was going to die, I ended up thinking that somehow or other I’d like to create one piece before my death ... I thought I ought to write my own requiem’<sup>64</sup>

In this version of events – corroborated by remarks of the composer elsewhere<sup>65</sup> – it is thus the composer himself who is, initially at least, the object of *déploration*. However, as Takemitsu goes on to admit, it was indeed as a result of hearing the

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<sup>63</sup> The composer’s programme note, in: *Shinphonī* (Bulletin of the Tōkyō Symphony Orchestra), June 1957. Quoted in Akiyama, Kuniharu: *Saishin Meikyoku Kaisetsu Zenshū* (Tōkyō: Ongaku no Tomo Sha, 1980), Vol. 7, p. 459

<sup>64</sup> Tachibana, Takashi: ‘Takemitsu Tōru: Ongaku Sōzō e no Tabi’ (Tōru Takemitsu: the Journey towards Musical Creation), *Bungakukai* Nov. 1993, p. 231

<sup>65</sup> Cf. for example Ozawa and Takemitsu, op. cit., p. 146

news of Hayasaka's death that he decided to make the work a *Requiem* (previously he had been thinking of calling it *Meditation*); and it was the same stimulus that granted him what he had previously found lacking, the strength of resolve and clarity of image needed to embark on the project. The work thus ended up becoming 'a requiem for Hayasaka and, at the same time, my own requiem.'<sup>66</sup>

Whatever the truth of the matter of its inspiration, certain it is that *Requiem for strings* turned out to be the launch-pad for Takemitsu's ascent to international celebrity. In 1959 Igor Stravinsky visited Japan, and asked the NHK to play him some tapes of new Japanese music. There was no plan to include Takemitsu's music amongst the works selected for audition, but by chance someone appears to have begun playing the tape of *Requiem* and – although the organisers were for stopping it – Stravinsky asked to hear the work through to the end. Later, at a press conference, asked if any of the many works he had heard were any good, Stravinsky mentioned only Takemitsu's name, commenting on the 'sincerity' and 'strictness' of his music, and apparently expressing his astonishment 'that music as passionate as this should be created by a man of such short stature!...' <sup>67</sup> – to which Seiji Ozawa, when retold the anecdote by Takemitsu<sup>68</sup>, provided the obvious rejoinder – 'Because he himself was short!' <sup>69</sup>

Later, Stravinsky invited Takemitsu to lunch, and it was through the senior Russian composer's kind offices that Takemitsu obtained the Koussevitsky commission which eventually resulted in the composition of *The Dorian Horizon*<sup>70</sup>. From around this point onwards, the nature of the details recorded in the various biographical notes on Takemitsu begins to change dramatically. Gone, for the most part, are the rather quaintly engaging, somewhat 'bohemian' anecdotal descriptions of the neophyte artist's fledgling struggles; instead, there is a steady *crecendo* of domestic and foreign premières, prestigious awards, stewardships of

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<sup>66</sup> Tachibana, op. cit., p. 232

<sup>67</sup> Quoted by 'Donald Rich' (?) in: 'Tōkyō no Stravinsky', *Ongaku Geijutsu*, Sept. 1959)

<sup>68</sup> Ozawa and Takemitsu, op. cit., p. 146

<sup>69</sup> 'I.S. is enjoying himself more than V.[era], partly, I think, because of his Japanese height. Standard-size installations fit him exactly. Whereas my head is a foot above the mirror when I shave, and my knees press against the wall of the W.C., these utilities are comfortably tailored to I.S.' Robert Craft, in Stravinsky, Igor and Craft, Robert: 'Dialogues and a Diary' (London: Faber, 1968), p. 192

<sup>70</sup> First performed in 1966 at the San Francisco 'Musica Viva', conducted by Aaron Copland

arts festivals, meetings with high-profile colleagues, ‘residencies’ at academic institutions – in short, of all the trappings of the successful international composer of today. While this distinguished career abundantly testifies to the high esteem with which Takemitsu was regarded in his profession, and to a certain degree vindicates the superlative position amongst his generation that he has been accorded in the West, it also makes for rather tiresome and repetitive reading. In dealing with this second, ‘post-Stravinskyan’ phase of Takemitsu’s biography, then, it has been decided to focus on two aspects of his subsequent career that seem of especial significance here, rather than attempt a mere chronological table of facts.

The first of these is a facet of Takemitsu’s career that may surprise the Western reader perusing the details of his later life – namely the fact that, even in his mature years, and despite his international celebrity, Takemitsu regularly continued to engage in what was, comparatively speaking, the ‘hack work’ of turning out scores for film and television productions. Takemitsu’s involvement with ‘incidental music’ for various dramaturgical media dates from at least as early as 1952, when he began working on music for a film about the artist Hokusai to a scenario by Shūzo Takiguchi – music which, owing to a change in production staff, was finally never used. During the next few years, Takemitsu provided incidental music for radio drama broadcasts and for stage productions of the *Shiki* (‘Four Seasons’) theatre company of which his wife, the actress Asaka Wakayama, had formerly been a member<sup>71</sup>, before in 1956 he produced his first full-length film score in collaboration with Masaru Sato, *Kurutta Kaijutsu* (‘Crazed Fruit’, dir. Kō Nakahira). This was to prove the first in a long series of movie scores which over the years amounted to over ninety titles in the genre, including such artistic and commercial highpoints as the music for Akira Kurosawa’s *Ran* (1986) and the more recent Hollywood blockbuster *Rising Sun* (dir. Philip Kaufman, 1993), in addition to several other award-winning soundtracks. Notwithstanding the consistently high quality of Takemitsu’s film music – which at its very humblest displays superb craftsmanship, and which at its best could stand alongside his concert works – it must be admitted that a primary motivation for his continuing involvement in this medium

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<sup>71</sup> Takemitsu married Wakayama on the 15th. of June 1954; their daughter Maki (whose name derives from the composer’s *Ki no Kyoku* or ‘Music of Tree’) was born in December 1961. Asaka-san had abandoned her acting career by the time Takemitsu came to compose music for *Shiki* productions, and his engagement for this task is apparently unconnected with her influence

was a financial one. Takemitsu's decision to finance his career as a composer in large part by this means (and also by means of the numerous detective novels which he turned out under a pseudonym) was important inasmuch as it allowed him the freedom to eschew the form of remuneration that is the staple recourse of composers in the West – teaching in higher education. As an *avant-garde* musician, Takemitsu would in any case not have been acceptable to the conservative Japanese academic establishment in his early years; but for his part, like the other *Jikken Kōbō* members, he was profoundly 'anti-establishment' in his political orientation, and in fact refused to accept academic appointments when in later years he was offered them. This decision of Takemitsu's has important repercussions for the student of the composer's music, who has to bear in mind that his audience is not, primarily, that of the academic community and his composing peers, and that the aesthetic priorities of his music may consequently differ markedly from those of other composers (particularly in the West) whose writing may, indeed, in large measure be aimed at such an audience.

Takemitsu's continuing engagement with film and television music also points both to the fecundity of his inventive talent – the above ninety-plus scores were written in addition to over a hundred works for the concert platform – and its versatility<sup>72</sup>, of which another example is afforded by his massive prose output, comprising not only several volumes of musical and aesthetic essays, but also the detective novels mentioned above. From the point of view of the issues under discussion here, however, perhaps the most significant aspect of this side of Takemitsu's career is the relationship between this 'incidental music' and his more 'serious' concert works. In some cases, as detailed below,<sup>73</sup> this takes the form simply of direct quotation or reworking. Of more profound significance to his concert works, however, was the opportunity for 'hands-on' experimentation which working within the medium of film music afforded him during his earlier years, some of the fruits of which had lasting repercussions in his concert music, as will be shown below.

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<sup>72</sup> Takemitsu's film music in fact offers a fascinating glimpse of another side of the composer's talent to that revealed by his concert scores, namely his abilities as a chameleon-like, virtuoso pastiche artist in a dazzling variety of musical styles, each of them perfectly tailored to the content of the film in question. Unfortunately, this is a subject outside the remit of the present enquiry

<sup>73</sup> See Section 7.2



The second aspect of the latter phase of Takemitsu's biography which would appear to be worthy of discussion here is one which relates to the overall theme of the present enquiry – that is to say, the relationship of Eastern and Western elements in the composer's musical language. In Part II of this dissertation, attempts will be made to suggest sources for the possible influences on Takemitsu's musical style; and, as a preliminary to investigations in this area, it will obviously be appropriate to consider some of the abundant opportunities afforded by Takemitsu's later career for contact both with living musicians and musical cultures, both Eastern and Western. These in turn may be treated under three headings: contemporary Western musicians; traditional Japanese and other non-Western musics; and, lying somewhere between the two, the pivotal and for Takemitsu crucial figure of John Cage.

Takemitsu met two important contemporary composers in April 1961, who had come to Japan to attend the 'Tōkyō World Music Conference': Luciano Berio and Iannis Xenakis. With Berio he spent some time hunting around shops selling Buddhist altar paraphernalia in Asakusa, looking for bell-chimes and the instrument the Japanese describe as a 'wooden fish' (*mokugyō*, a kind of 'temple block'). Subsequently the two composers appear to have come into contact on at least a couple of other occasions: in 1980, when Takemitsu spent two weeks in Australia to make preliminary arrangements for a large-scale 'joint venture' with Berio under the auspices of Eurovision; and in 1992, when Berio and the London Sinfonietta were invited to Tōkyō in order to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of Takemitsu's 'Music Today' festival. The name of Xenakis was also to crop up a few more times in Takemitsu's biography, most interestingly perhaps during two weeks spanning the end of 1972 and beginning of 1973, in which he and Takemitsu (and Betsy Jolas) formed part of a delegation to the Indonesian island of Bali, Takemitsu emerging from the experience fascinated both by the gamelan music and the inhabitants' lifestyle.

Despite the helping hand extended to the younger composer by Stravinsky, Takemitsu, as he was later to admit, 'even at that time...didn't like his music so much'<sup>74</sup>, and there appears to have been no further contact between the two men (although Takemitsu and Leon Kirchner did attempt – unsuccessfully, as

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<sup>74</sup> Takemitsu, Cronin and Tann, op. cit., p. 207

it turned out – to pay a visit to Stravinsky in hospital during his final illness.) One major figure with whom Takemitsu undoubtedly did share some spiritual affinity, however, was Olivier Messiaen. Although the latter's name was, as has already been observed, regularly to be found on *Jikken Kōbō* programmes in the 'fifties, and although Takemitsu has revealed that he obtained a score of Messiaen's work 'quite by accident from Toshi Ichiyanagi' as early as 1950, which was 'to have a great influence on my musical development'<sup>75</sup>, the composer himself did not come to Japan until 1962, when Ozawa gave the first performance there of his *Turangalîla*. Takemitsu's first meeting with the French musician appears to have occurred in Paris three years later; but it was on account of what took place during their meeting in New York in 1975 that Takemitsu in his writings uniquely suffixes Messiaen's name with the honorific *sensei* ('teacher'), an accolade certainly not accorded to his 'official' teacher Kiyose. This was the occasion of the performance, by the ensemble Tashi, of the *Quatuor pour la Fin du Temps*, when Messiaen gave Takemitsu a two-hour 'lesson' analysing the work in detail, as a result of which Takemitsu asked if he could write a work employing the same forces, which eventually became his *Quatrain*. Takemitsu's reverence for the French composer was not entirely uncritical – in conversation with Ozawa, for example, he describes *La Transfiguration* as 'a bit too long'<sup>76</sup> – but it persisted up to the time of Messiaen's death in 1992, when Takemitsu wrote *Rain Tree Sketch II*, for piano, in his memory. Some cynics might point out that the description *sensei* could with equal justification have been applied to Messiaen even if the New York meeting had never taken place, and that in fact it even represents a rather understated assessment of the extent of his 'influence' on Takemitsu – a criticism that certainly appears to have some superficial justification, and which will be dealt with more fully in its place.<sup>77</sup>

Other Western composers whose names crop up in Takemitsu's biography include the 'founding father' of *musique concrète*, Pierre Schaeffer, who came to Japan in 1964, and whom Takemitsu met in Paris the following year along with

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<sup>75</sup> Takemitsu, transl. Kakudo and Glasow, op. cit., p. 141. The score to which Takemitsu makes reference here may possibly have been Messiaen's *8 Préludes*, to which – according to Professor Joaquim Benitez of Elisabeth University – Takemitsu was introduced by Ichiyanagi while in hospital in 1952 (private conversation with the author)

<sup>76</sup> Ozawa and Takemitsu, op. cit., p. 149

<sup>77</sup> See below, Section 9.2

Messiaen and Xenakis; Karlheinz Stockhausen, who was in Ōsaka for 'Expo '70' and who, in his sleeve-notes for *Telemusik*, numbers Takemitsu amongst his friends; and Lukas Foss, Peter Sculthorpe and Vinko Globokar, who also participated in the same festival.<sup>78</sup> As hinted above, however, the Western composer who was to have the most radical influence on the course of Takemitsu's musical development was John Cage; and, as the dates in his biography fully confirm, this influence predates by several years Cage's actual arrival in the Far East for the first time in 1962. The resemblance of the æsthetic ideals and performance practices of the *Jikken Kōbō* to those of the New York 'experimental school' has already been commented upon, and it is no surprise to learn therefore that Takemitsu had already, 'shortly after the war, through the intellectual antennæ of Shūzo Takiguchi and Kuniharu Akiyama'<sup>79</sup> begun to hear about Cage's innovations. Furthermore, there were also indirect links with the American composer via Japanese musicians who had been working in the United States, such as Toshi Ichianagi, who studied with Cage in New York, and after nine years in the U.S. returned to give the Japanese première of Cage's *Concert for piano and orchestra* in 1961 – a performance which so impressed Takemitsu that, in his obituary tribute to Cage thirty-one years later, he commented that 'I still feel the shock of hearing that piece.'<sup>80</sup> It is hardly surprising, therefore, to find some of Cage's innovations already being adopted by Japanese musicians, including Takemitsu, during the years preceding his actual arrival. As suggested earlier, film scores seem to have been regarded by Takemitsu at this stage as suitable laboratories for experimentation with new techniques, and it is in one of these, the music for his 1962 film *Otoshiana*<sup>81</sup> that he introduced parts for two prepared pianos, played by Ichianagi and Yuji Takahashi, a third part for harpsichord being played by the composer himself. Around this time, too, the composer began to experiment for the first time with forms of 'graphic' notation; his *Corona* for pianist, for whose score he collaborated with the graphic designer Kōhei Sugiura, was premièred by Takahashi in February 1962. True to their American counterparts (and, some might add, to the Japanese penchant for imitation), the Japanese musicians also exhibited their graphic scores as works of

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<sup>78</sup> Takemitsu was later to write one of the solo parts of *Gémeaux* (1971-86) for Globokar, in his other capacity as virtuoso trombonist

<sup>79</sup> Takemitsu, transl. Kakudo and Glasow, op. cit., p. 137

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> 'The Pitfall'/'Cheap, Sweet and a Kid', dir. Horoshi Teshigahara

visual art in their own right; Takemitsu's next work in this vein, *Corona II* for strings, which he produced in collaboration with the Italian designer Bruno Munari, saw the light of day in March 1963 not at a concert hall, but alongside similar efforts by Toshi Ichihyanagi, Toshirō Mayuzumi and Yuji Takahashi in a Tōkyō art gallery.

John Cage and David Tudor actually arrived in Japan for the first time in October, 1962, and Takemitsu travelled together with them to the north of Japan for the Sapporo Contemporary Music Festival, where his own partly indeterminate work *Ring* was performed; two years later, they returned with the Merce Cunningham dance troupe, and Takemitsu once again accompanied them north, this time to hear Cage's *Atlas Eclipticalis*. As the above details indicate, many of Cage's ideas had already been put into practice before his arrival, and superficially at least, his actual presence would seem only to have put the official seal of approval on developments that were already taking place. At the same time however, it has to be noted that prepared pianos do not figure largely in the instrumental preferences of Takemitsu's mature scores<sup>82</sup> and even the fascination with coloured shapes and musical *origami* evinced by the two *Corona* scores was to prove almost as evanescent. What Cage bequeathed to Takemitsu, then, was clearly less a matter of specific compositional techniques than of philosophical or ideational orientation; specifically, and crucially, it is Cage whom Takemitsu credits with reconciling him to the culture from which he had since his formative years been most deeply alienated - his own native Japanese tradition:

'... in my own life, in my own development, for a long period I struggled to avoid being "Japanese", to avoid "Japanese" qualities. It was largely through my contact with John Cage that I came to recognise the value of my own tradition.'<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> This does not hold true, however, for his film music, in which he continued to use the prepared piano, usually with electronic treatment, throughout the 'sixties - e.g. in *Ansatsu* ('The Assassin', dir. Masahiro Shinoda, 1964, *Kwaidan* (dir. Masaki Kobayashi, 1964) and *Yotsuya Kaidan* ('Yotsuya Ghost Story', dir. Shiro Toyoda, 1965.) One suspects that its absence from his concert music may have had much to do with the pragmatic consideration of the enormous set-up time required when such works are performed in the concert hall.

<sup>83</sup> Takemitsu (1989), p. 199

The actual historical facts, however, seem to suggest that Takemitsu was already deeply interested in traditional Japanese music before Cage's appearance on the scene. He describes the shock with which he first realised its intrinsic qualities in similarly epiphanic terms to those employed to describe his exposure to Josephine Baker years previously:

'It was ten years after I began studying music that I received a strong shock from a *bunraku*<sup>84</sup> performance. It was then that I became aware of Japan for the first time. In fact I saw Japan represented as distinct from myself, and acknowledged it as entirely different.'<sup>85</sup>

And in fact, Takemitsu had already begun experimenting with the actual use of traditional instruments in his music in the year before Cage's arrival, the medium of incidental music here providing the testing ground for experiments that were later to be incorporated into his more 'serious' work. It was for a television programme broadcast by the NHK in 1961, *Nihon no Monyō* ('Japanese crest patterns'), that he first made use of such instruments as the *chikuzenbiwa*<sup>86</sup> and *koto*; subsequently he was also to make use of the *biwa* in his music for the films *Seppuku* ('Hara-kiri') (dir. Masaki Kobayashi, 1962) and *Kwaidan*, and in 1966 went a stage further, blending such traditional instruments as the *shakuhachi*<sup>87</sup>, *shinobue*<sup>88</sup> and *ryūteki*<sup>89</sup> with Western symphony orchestra in his music for the television drama series *Minamoto Yoshitune*. Such experiments as these were of course to feed into Takemitsu's music for the concert hall, culminating in the composition of *November Steps* for *biwa*, *shakuhachi* and orchestra in 1967, and *Autumn* for the same media in 1973. Yet, apart from one or two other experiments – one of them, *Ceremonial, an autumn ode* for *shō*<sup>90</sup> and orchestra, as recent as 1992 – this very literal and concrete form of incorporation of traditional Japanese music into Takemitsu's scores generally turned out to be almost as marginal and ephemeral an interest as

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<sup>84</sup> Traditional Japanese puppet theatre

<sup>85</sup> Takemitsu, 'Mirrors', p. 55

<sup>86</sup> A specific variety of the *biwa* or lute-like instrument, which appeared during the Meiji era in the northern province of Kyūshū formerly known as Chikuzen (now known as Fukuoka)

<sup>87</sup> An end-blown, vertical bamboo flute

<sup>88</sup> A transverse bamboo flute used in the *Kabuki* drama

<sup>89</sup> Transverse bamboo flute used in *Gagaku* music

<sup>90</sup> 'Mouth-organ' comprising a windchest and seventeen bamboo pipes, used in *Gagaku* music

his temporary fascination with prepared pianos and musical graphics.<sup>91</sup> The more durable contribution to Takemitsu's music from his own native tradition, has, like the influence of Cage, operated rather on the level of philosophical and æsthetic ideas – concepts such as 'an emphasis on the spatial qualities of music, the expressive meaning ascribed to spans of silence, and a sensitivity to the absolute beauty of isolated moments and of individual sound events.'<sup>92</sup>

Here of course there is a congruence of interest between traditional Eastern ideas and Cage's own, for Cage, as is well known, and as Takemitsu readily acknowledges, 'was influenced through Zen through his encounters with the Zen master Daisetz Suzuki'<sup>93</sup>; superficially, the process of influence appears to present another example of that kind of 'feedback loop' whereby Eastern ideas reach the Orient via the West, another example of which is afforded by the interest 'Eastern'-inspired composers such as Debussy have traditionally held for the Japanese. But once again the chronological facts suggest a slightly different story, for Takemitsu's writings about his music indicate that his musical thinking was consciously influenced by 'Eastern' æsthetic preoccupations long before his actual encounters with Cage and his philosophy. For example, as early as 1957, he writes in his programme notes for the *Requiem for Strings* that 'in this work, the sense of "beat" is totally opposite to that of the West'<sup>94</sup>; while, two years later, the claim is made for his *Masque* for two flutes that it 'exists in that inner world of time that cannot be grasped by means of so-called "Western" ideas about metre'<sup>95</sup>. Clearly then, Takemitsu's exposure to Cage and his 'Eastern' philosophical notions simply provided the confirmation of ideas that had already taken root in the former's psyche; as Dana Richard Wilson puts it, his impact on the Japanese was really 'lending a stamp of Western legitimacy'<sup>96</sup> to developments that were already taking place. It

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<sup>91</sup> Once again, however, his film music proves an exception to the rule, for here traditional Japanese instruments continued to be used (largely, of course, for their anecdotal associations) right up to the time of his final contributions to the genre

<sup>92</sup> Koozin (1988), p. 283

<sup>93</sup> Takemitsu, op. cit., loc. cit.

<sup>94</sup> The composer's programme note, in *Sinfonī*, loc. cit.

<sup>95</sup> Record notes for Victor SJX-1002; quoted in Narazaki, Yoko: 'Takemitsu Tōru to Miyoshi Akira no Sakkyoku-Yoshiki: muchōsei to ongun-sakahō o megutte' (Tōkyō: Ongaku no Tomo Sha, 1993), p. 94

<sup>96</sup> Wilson, Dana Richard: 'The role of texture in selected works of Tōru Takemitsu' (PhD thesis, Eastman School of Music, 1982), p. 35

is this type of thing to which Takemitsu perhaps refers when he notes that 'the important thing that has happened inside me is that I have recognised my own culture through studying modern Western music.'<sup>97</sup>

That it should require a Western 'stamp of approval' to legitimise a Japanese composer's explorations of his own culture should not surprise us; that this endorsement should come from America is especially appropriate. Takemitsu's earliest musical experiences established in him a clear polarisation between colourful American jazz and sounds of a traditional music to which he was first indifferent, then openly hostile; later, it was music broadcast on the American forces radio that awakened in him the desire to become a composer in the Western classical tradition. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that it finally required the authority of an American musician to permit him to proceed with the task towards which he had already been tentatively groping - the shaping of his own 'universal egg', the re-integration of elements of his own culture into his musical language - in short, Takemitsu's own personal version of the quest which, as has been seen, pre-occupied Japanese musicians for over a century, for some sort of synthesis between Western music and their own. John Cage's appearance on the scene, therefore, acted upon certain Japanese musicians of Takemitsu's generation like some sort of mystic counterweight to the appearance of Commodore Perry a century previously; except that, whereas the earlier American had brought the ideas of the West to Japan, Cage was acting as a catalyst for the resurgence of 'Eastern' ideas once more - and this time in a benign form which the 'Herodian' spirits of the post-war generation could adopt without the fear that they were lapsing into the 'Zealotism' of pre-war years.

In the summer of 1995, Takemitsu's hectic artistic career came to a sudden halt with his collapse and admission to hospital. Even here, deprived of the opportunity for any other kind of work, he 'painstakingly covered page after page [of his notebook] with recipes for fantastic dishes of his own devising'<sup>98</sup>, and once released,

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<sup>97</sup> Takemitsu, Tōru, 'A Mirror and an Egg.' *Soundings* 12 (1984-5), p. 3

<sup>98</sup> Oliver Knussen: contribution to Takemitsu's obituary in the *Independent*, 22/2/96. Some of these recipes, with their delightful colour illustrations in Takemitsu's own hand, are reproduced in *Takemitsu Tōru no Sekai* ('The World of Tōru Takemitsu'), edited by Shinji Seito and the composer's daughter Maki (Tōkyō: Shūeisha, 1997), pp. 22-25

his enthusiasm for all aspects of his active artistic life continued unabated. In particular, he was planning an event in collaboration with the opera house at Lyon which, if realised, would have resulted in his first venture into the operatic medium being produced there in the autumn of 1998, and it is fascinating to think what this skilled composer of film and theatre music might have achieved in this field.<sup>99</sup> As it is, of course, the plan remained tragically unfulfilled, for Takemitsu was re-admitted to hospital and died of cancer on the afternoon of the 20th. February, 1996, aged sixty-five.

As already stated, the composer's output during his lifetime was vast, including more than a hundred scores for stage, radio, television and the cinema in addition to his 'serious' music. It is, sadly, beyond the scope of this dissertation to deal with these areas outside his 'official' composing career; the discussion which follows will be limited almost exclusively to the composer's 'serious' works, and even here, no pretence is made that it has been possible to examine exhaustively the entire output of over a hundred scores. With these qualifications, the next section will attempt to present a brief overview of the composer's collected *œuvre*, and to examine how Takemitsu's 'universal egg' born of East-West fusion came gradually to take shape.

### 1.3 Musical: development of Takemitsu's musical language

The listener whose acquaintance of Takemitsu's music is limited to his most famous work, *November Steps* (1967), might experience a certain surprise if they happened by chance to stumble upon a performance of one of his more recent scores on the radio. It is generally accepted by writers on Takemitsu that the composer's style underwent a significant change in the latter half of the 1970s, and thereafter maintained a certain stylistic consistency. Yōko Narazaki goes so far as to take this change of direction as the basis for a bipartite division of the composer's compositional activity, which, she boldly asserts:

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<sup>99</sup> The opera, whose title would apparently have been *La Madrugada* ('Dawn', 'Daybreak'), was to have a libretto by Takemitsu and the American 'beat generation' novelist Barry Gifford; the producer was to be the Swiss film director Daniel Schmidt. Cf. Funayama, Takashi, 'Takemitsu Tōru Kenkyū Nōto 14; Toki wa Inochi no Ki no Ha – "Umi" to "Opera" ' (*Ongaku Geijutsu* 54/5 (May 1996), p. 54ff.) for more speculation on the nature of the unfinished project



‘...beginning with his *Lento in due Movimenti* for piano (1950) may be divided into two periods: the first lasting from this compositional *début* until the end of the 1970s, the second comprising the period from the 1980s onward. Superficially speaking, the transition from the first period to the second corresponds to a change from an “*avant-garde*” to a “conservative” style.’<sup>100</sup>

The first part of this claim at least, that there was some sort of stylistic rupture around this time, finds broad support among other writers on the subject. Writing in 1982, for example, Dana Richard Wilson notes that Takemitsu’s most recent works are characterised by a greater interest in the interaction of musical families, which rarely act as ‘blocks’, that they are motivically tighter, and rely on doublings for the projection of ideas: ‘One might liken them to a Persian tapestry, while the earlier works are like the paintings of Seurat or Pissarro.’<sup>101</sup> Wilson significantly draws attention to the orchestral work *A Flock Descends into the Pentagonal Garden* (1977) to illustrate this tendency towards instrumental doublings on the part of the composer, and notes that it suggests ‘a change in Takemitsu’s conception of the orchestra.’<sup>102</sup> Similarly, in his investigation into the composer’s piano music, Timothy Koozin notes that in *Les Yeux Clos* (1979), the sparse textures of earlier pieces are ‘here replaced by a more continuous and full texture’ and that the work ‘displays a greater level of rhythmic regularity’<sup>103</sup>; concluding elsewhere that, in general terms, as Takemitsu begins to create thicker textures and greater levels of rhythmic regularity in later works, ‘he moves continuously toward a greater reliance on octatonic and whole-tone-derived pitch structures.’<sup>104</sup> And views such as the above are corroborated to a certain extent by the composer himself, who has remarked that ‘compared to works from the time when I wrote *Arc* [i.e. the 1960s and early ’70s], my recent pieces are much simpler.’<sup>105</sup>

There is thus a general consensus of support for the view that Takemitsu’s musical manner underwent a ‘sea-change’ in the latter half of the ’seventies; furthermore, as the years progressed, it became apparent that this mature style was

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<sup>100</sup> Narasaki, Yoko, op. cit., p. 86

<sup>101</sup> Wilson, Dana Richard, op. cit., p. 256

<sup>102</sup> Ibid., p. 150

<sup>103</sup> Koozin (1988), p. 186

<sup>104</sup> Ibid., p. 285

<sup>105</sup> Takemitsu, transl. Kakudo and Glasow, p. 126

‘conservative’ in more senses than one, had in fact become ‘normative’ for the composer, and that subsequent works would afford little by way of surprise or of deviation from this norm. Perhaps ‘S-E-A change’ would be a more appropriate orthography to describe the transformation, since one of the key elements in the forging of the new style was the creation of a series of works which Takemitsu calls *Waterscape*, the first member of which was a work for brass ensemble, *Garden Rain*, in 1974. Several of these works share material derived from a three-note motif comprising the pitches Eb, E $\flat$  and A, equivalent to ‘S-E-A’ in German nomenclature; and Takemitsu has said that his intention was ‘to create a series of works, which like their subject, pass through a series of metamorphoses, culminating in a sea of tonality.’<sup>106</sup> One expression of this goal is found in the unambiguously tonal endings at which many of the pieces in the collection arrive: for example *Garden Rain* itself ends in an unequivocal B major with a strong hint of the ‘verticalised pentatonic’ category of harmony which was to become such a distinctive cadential feature of Takemitsu’s scores from the late ‘seventies onwards. In more general terms, however, the works of the later period are characterised by a much less abrasive harmonic language than that of their predecessors, with recognisably scale-derived forms assuming a more dominant profile, as Koozin points out with reference to octatonic and whole-tone forms in the quotation above. Thus the idea of progression towards a ‘sea of tonality’, which Takemitsu applies to the micro-cosmic world of the *Waterscape* cycle, could equally well be taken as a metaphor for the direction taken by Takemitsu’s harmonic language as a whole during these latter years; what has been described as ‘the stylistic *volte-face* of a conversion to tonality’<sup>107</sup>, as, ‘in contrast to the use of dissonant pitch relationships dominated by minor seconds, major sevenths and minor ninths’ of earlier pieces, ‘in the works of the 1980s whole-tone melodies [sic] and consonant sounds assume prominence.’<sup>108</sup>

This change of emphasis in the sphere of harmonic choices, however, while aurally perhaps the most immediately striking feature of Takemitsu’s later manner, is by no means the only aspect of his musical language to have undergone radical revision in his mature years. As the above quotations from Wilson indicate, for example, Takemitsu’s handling of texture also underwent a simplification, with

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<sup>106</sup> Frontispiece to score of ‘Rain Coming’ (1982)

<sup>107</sup> Funayama, Takashi: ‘Takemitsu Tōru Kenkyū Nōto 2’, p. 53

<sup>108</sup> Narazaki, op. cit., p. 86

the complex stratification of sound-layers associated with such works as *November Steps* tending to give way to a much more 'classical' treatment of instrumental forces, in which essentially homogeneous textures are now expanded by means of doubling. Wilson's reference to the fact that these works are 'motivically tighter' also draws attention to the renewed interest in thematicism displayed in these later scores, an interest which had been largely in abeyance during the 'pointilist' explorations of the preceding years. And there is also a change in the type of forces for which Takemitsu began to write in his capacity as internationally successful composer; Narazaki comments on the fact that 'the musical media employed...are dominated more and more by the orchestra and conventional Western instruments'<sup>109</sup>, and this change of instrumental medium seems at least to have run in tandem with the stylistic changes in Takemitsu's musical utterances, even if it is difficult to determine which of the two was responsible for the other. Certainly the works Takemitsu wrote for such prestigious, mainstream 'Classical' soloists as John Williams (*Vers, l'Arc-en-Ciel, Palma*, 1984), Nobuko Imai (*A String Around Autumn*, 1989) or Yehudi Menuhin (*Nostalghia*, 1987) treat the solo instrument in a very different manner to that which the composer had employed when dealing with that stalwart of the *avant-garde*, the pianist-composer Yūji Takahashi, in such works of the 'sixties as *Arc* or *Asterism*. Indeed Takemitsu's very departure from his previous practice of using such 'non-sustaining' instruments as piano, percussion and marimba as soloists, towards the use of stringed instruments 'whose strong point is the production of sustained rather than short sounds' is, for Narazaki, 'an indicator of the degree to which textures have become dominated by song-like writing.'<sup>110</sup> These and other aspects of Takemitsu's final period will be dealt with more fully in their place, when the time comes to examine the composer's musical language in detail in Part II of this thesis.

Given the general unanimity of commentators on Takemitsu's change of direction at the latter end of the 1970s, it might be thought that Narazaki's bipartite 'periodisation' of the composer's output, quoted at the beginning of this section, could serve as an adequate enough working description of his development. However, while the compositional language of the last period remained relatively con-

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<sup>109</sup> Ibid.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid., p. 94

sistent until the composer's death, the period preceding it was marked by much greater experimentation and is in consequence much more stylistically heterogeneous. Adequately to reflect this multiplicity might require a further subdivision of this initial phase into any number of additional 'periods', and indeed the passage from the thesis by Wilson referred to earlier divides the composer's output up to 1980 alone into three periods, lasting a decade each. Nevertheless, for the purposes of the present enquiry, it has been decided to make a single, crude subdivision of this 'modernist' phase in Takemitsu's career: taking the works of his first decade, from 1950 onwards, under the umbrella of *juvenalia* or 'first period', and reserving the term 'second period' for the works of roughly the succeeding decade and a half, which encompassed the apogee of Takemitsu's involvement with 'high modernism.' (The more accommodating style of later years thus comes to be referred to as 'third period' in this scheme of things.)

The principal reason for making this distinction is that the works written in the first decade of Takemitsu's 'official' composing career by and large do not reveal any signs of influence from those elements outside the 'European' modernist tradition which were to make such a dramatic impact on the composer's language in subsequent years – in other words, traditional Japanese and other non-Western musics on the one hand, and the 'American Experimental' school of John Cage and his followers on the other. The handful of scores which survive from this period thus provide an opportunity to see in their clearest form the stylistic imprints of the European and American composers by whom Takemitsu was initially most profoundly influenced, before the fruits of such influence are either obscured by the acquisition of newer stylistic habits, or completely discarded. At the same time, however, while these 'journeyman' works often throw into very stark relief those aspects of the young composer's style which are clearly derivative of his models, to the extent to which certain distinctive modes of working emerge in spite of this, they also furnish early examples of those elements of Takemitsu's style which are most clearly the composer's own – for example, the delineation of large-scale form by means of repeated sections. Again, this and other aspects of the composer's musical language in its initial phase will receive due individual attention in the succeeding part of this thesis.

The changes wrought upon this 'first period' musical language by powerful outside influences around 1960 have not escaped the attention of other commentators. Yukiko Sawabe, for instance, writes that

'At the beginning of the 'sixties two new elements made their appearance in Takemitsu's music: namely, traditional Japanese instruments, and the discovery of "nature" in music, a discovery in which the composer was encouraged by his encounter with John Cage.'<sup>111</sup>

As a result of these two influences in particular, the style hitherto favoured by Takemitsu – best typified, perhaps, by the restrained *gravitas* of his famous *Requiem for Strings* (1957) – gave way to a period of more radical experimentation. Cage's influence – arriving in Japan, as has been seen, by way of Toshi Ichiyanagi – began to assert its presence in the use of 'aleatoric' elements in such works as *Ring* (1961) and in the graphic notation of *Corona* and *Crossing* (both written in 1962). Familiarity with the contemporary European *avant-garde* is suggested by such devices as the *Marteau sans maître*-like pointillistics and *Sequenza*-like flute writing of *Sacrifice* (1962), while the sound-world especially associated with composers such as Xenakis and Penderecki finds abundant echoes in the massively divided and densely chromatic writing for orchestra (in particular, *the strings*) in works such as the *Arc* trilogy and *Coral Island* (1962). And of course these 'Western' resources were soon further supplemented by the arrival of traditional Japanese instruments on the scene, beginning with *Eclipse* for *biwa* and *shakuhachi* in 1966. The major works of this 'second period', such as *November Steps*, the *Arc* trilogy for piano and orchestra, and *Autumn*, together form a kind of massive compendium of all the '*avant-garde*' techniques which the composer had acquired. Like their counterparts in the European music of the period, these scores betray the date of their composition by virtue of sheer size alone; the vast systems of closely-written staves on each page reflect the *Zeitgeist* of high-modernist complexity of their epoch, and the apogee of Takemitsu's 'second period' style. From here on for Takemitsu, perhaps, as for Western music in general, there was no way forward but by means of the apparent *volte-face* into the simplified language of his 'third period' manner.

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<sup>111</sup> Sawabe, Yukiko: 'Alpträume und Träume: Der japanische Komponist Tōru Takemitsu.' *Musik-Texte* 59 (June 1995), p. 50

While it is readily admitted that this division of Takemitsu's career into a crude 'beginning-middle-end' tryptich is a somewhat simplistic one, it is an idea that does at least appear to find support amongst one or two other writers on the subject.<sup>112</sup> Of course, it is not suggested that this threefold division of Takemitsu's creative career can ever be taken as an absolute compartmentalisation: Takemitsu, as has been mentioned previously, had already begun experimenting with *musique concrète* alongside the more conventional scores of the 'fifties, and his comments on some of these reveal a conscious affinity with traditional Japanese aesthetics; similarly, there are premonitions of the forthcoming 'sea of tonality' in the endings of such works as *Sacrifice* from the 'second period' of his output. But taken as a very broad generalisation, the model provides a serviceable enough picture of Takemitsu's overall development, and one which in its basic outlines illustrates the particular course taken by this composer in the ongoing quest of Japanese musicians for some sort of East-West synthesis in their art: starting out from a position of total 'Herodian' rejection of the indigenous, like so many of his generation; becoming gradually reconciled to the re-introduction of native elements via Cage's influence; and eventually arriving at a more subtle incorporation of Japanese elements into his music on an aesthetic or philosophical level. Koozin sees this progress as reflecting in microcosm the whole history of the modern Japanese artist's attempt to discover an authentic voice:

'The movement away from simple combinations of Eastern and Western devices in favour of a more complex and subtle integration of international elements is reflected in Takemitsu's development as a composer.'<sup>113</sup>

With the above crude 'periodisation' of the composer's *œuvre* thus established as a skeletal outline of his development, Part II of this dissertation will now proceed to the manner in which this development is reflected in each aspect of the composer's musical language, and how the separate elements relate to any stimuli the composer might have received from East or West along the way.

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<sup>112</sup> For example Funayama, op. cit., pp. 49-50, refers to 'early, middle and late periods' of the composer's music, as does Miyuki Shiraishi in her 'Umi kara, futatabi ame tonari' (*Ōngaku Geijutsu* 54/5 (May, 1996), p. 49)

<sup>113</sup> Koozin (1988), p. 283

## **Part II**

### **Takemitsu's Musical Language**

## Chapter II

### Form

Part II of this thesis is devoted to a detailed investigation of the nature, and possible sources, of Takemitsu's musical language. The manner in which it has been decided to present this material is not a quasi-historical or biographical one, nor one which makes reference to what one might describe as the 'syntagmatic' structure of selected individual works, but rather a kind of 'paradigmatic' presentation, that is to say, one which attempts to organise the various characteristic technical devices to be found in Takemitsu's scores into a sort of *Technique de son Langage Musical*. Such a process might seem straightforward enough, given that 'one might reasonably assume that modes of analysis conventionally applied to Western art music would serve to reveal [Takemitsu's] compositional structure and idea.'<sup>114</sup> In fact however, as Rands himself goes on to point out, one soon discovers that such a policy throws up 'profound questions', in the face of which, 'certain assumptions, initially prompted by the surface characteristics of the music, seem less certain.'<sup>115</sup> This sense of a mysterious impermeability to logical analysis appears to be reinforced if one turns to Takemitsu's voluminous writings on his music, which are 'remarkably and refreshingly free from supporting theory, apology and critical analysis' and 'devoid of terminology explaining compositional techniques.'<sup>116</sup> In stark contrast to the theoretical writings of his Western contemporaries, Takemitsu's texts preoccupy themselves largely with highly abstract æsthetic and philosophical problems expressed in a flowery and poetic language, and consequently suggest that the composer has a quite different concept of the nature of 'exegesis' to that of his Western colleagues:

'The impression that the reader receives from a close reading of Takemitsu's fifteen or sixteen written texts is of a literary expression that is diverse, polysemous and at times contradictory. This may be considered a distinctive feature,

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<sup>114</sup> Rands, Bernard: 'I sing only for myself ...' 'Musical Times' CXXVII/1735 (Sept. 1987), p. 477

<sup>115</sup> Ibid.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.



not found in the literary texts or collections of interviews by such Western European composers as Boulez, Stockhausen or Xenakis.<sup>117</sup>

In fact, the closest Western analogues to Takemitsu's particular form of theoretical writing are probably the collections of texts by John Cage in such works as *Silence*, *A Year From Monday* and so forth, which exhibit a similar clear difference of attitude to the function of explication to that found in *Penser la musique aujourd'hui*, *Texte zur Musik* or *Formalized Music*. One has, in consequence, the feeling that one is going wholly against the grain of the composer's actual, professed concept of appropriate descriptive language by attempting to submit his scores to inappropriate dissection by Western analytical tools.

There is admittedly one major exception to the composer's reticence about his technical processes: in his book *Dream and Number*, Takemitsu gives detailed descriptions of the 'magic square' based on the black notes of the piano which he drew up as a precompositional basis for *A Flock Descends into the Pentagonal Garden*.<sup>118</sup> This uniquely candid exposition has been eagerly seized upon by Takemitsu scholars, and Ohtake, for example, devotes several pages of her book on the composer to a paraphrase of Takemitsu's scheme<sup>119</sup>. But even here, the reader who expects an exhaustive analysis of the work in question will be disappointed; some of Takemitsu's graphics and musical quotations seem to stand in an almost decorative function to the text, being referred to only obliquely or not at all, and leaving the reader's curiosity tantalisingly unsatisfied. Furthermore, this rigorous application of premeditated 'method' on the composer's part represents something of an anomaly in his working, as he himself has indicated:

'When I compose music, before actually writing the notes I prepare carefully, and sometimes I construct a series or something like that; but after I have started to write the piece, my plans may change. Sometimes I change my previous plan with my intuition, but *A Flock Descends* is written with a very

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<sup>117</sup> Funayama, Takashi, 'Takemitsu Tōru Kenkyū Nōto 2', p. 50

<sup>118</sup> Takemitsu, Tōru: 'Yume to Kazu' (Tōkyō: Libro Port, 1987)

<sup>119</sup> Ohtake, Noriko: 'Creative Sources for the Music of Tōru Takemitsu' (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1993), pp. 29-32

strict row. It is programmed, controlled.'<sup>120</sup>

The implication here is that Takemitsu's compositional method, except in the case of *A Flock Descends*, is one of capricious diversion from the initial precompositional materials, and that the end result is therefore no longer amenable to exhaustive analysis by Western procedures. Certainly, commentators on Takemitsu seem in general to have abstained from making the attempt to understand him in terms of such procedures. Ohtake, for example, who as a native Japanese speaker has more access than most others to the copious body of Takemitsu's own exegetical work, adopts in her book the same tone of æsthetic and philosophical speculation as the composer himself; while both Koozin, in his analyses of the piano works, and Smaldone, in his paper on *November Steps* and *Autumn*<sup>121</sup> revert to techniques of pitch-class and 'Schenkerian' graphic analysis to reveal what are – in the opinion of the present writer, at least – probably unconscious deep-level structural processes on the part of the composer. In spite of these precedents, it is still the writer's belief that an investigation into the composer's technical language with the tools of Western analysis might profitably be made, and this for two reasons. First, despite all the above reservations, a not inconsiderable amount of insight can still be gained by a pursuit of this route, as it is hoped the following pages will reveal. Secondly, the unexplained *residuum* that is left over when 'the end of the fertile lands' have been reached and Western analytical methods can proceed no further, is in itself a measure of the extent to which the music is governed by preoccupations which transcend efforts to be understood by such means – a point to which it will be necessary to return in the concluding part of this enquiry.<sup>122</sup>

In the ensuing pages, then, an attempt will be made to codify the recurrent preoccupations of Takemitsu's musical thinking, and, in particular, to consider them from two angles relevant to the issues raised in Part I of this thesis: the degree to which his stylistic traits evolved over the course of the 'three periods'

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<sup>120</sup> Takemitsu, Tōru with Tania Cronin and Hilary Tann: 'Afterword' ('Perspectives of New Music' XXVII/2 [Summer 1989]), p. 208

<sup>121</sup> Smaldone, Edward: 'Japanese and Western Confluences in Large-Scale Pitch Organization of Tōru Takemitsu's *November Steps* and *Autumn*.' 'Perspectives of New Music' XXVII/2 (1989), pp. 216-231

<sup>122</sup> See below, section 9.3

into which his output has been arbitrarily divided; and the extent to which they demonstrate traceable influences of either Eastern or Western origin, which may illuminate the overall enquiry into Takemitsu's handling of input from those two sources. This second part of the thesis has been divided into seven chapters, each dealing with one area of broad concern such as the composer's handling of 'Pitch materials', 'Time and space', 'Timbre', 'Texture' and so forth, with each chapter further subdivided into sections dealing with areas of more specific enquiry. For purely arbitrary reasons, the topic with which it has been decided that this first chapter will concern itself is that of the composer's handling of structural organization in its macroscopic aspect.

Such a search for 'formalistic' procedures in the overall organization of individual works might seem a doomed exercise, given certain of the composer's actual pronouncements on this aspect of compositional method. Takemitsu often remarked that he considered that the function of the composer was to give 'meaning to the stream of sounds that runs through our world'<sup>123</sup>, and this comment had already, during his lifetime, given rise to a somewhat unkind *bon mot*, namely, that he did not so much compose as cut off the required length of material from the same source for each piece he wrote. As well as implying repetitiveness, this barb also suggests a certain amorphousness in the composer's output, and it is certainly true that one looks in vain for the same kind of formal rigour in Takemitsu's music as that which one would expect to find in the music of most of his Western contemporaries:

'In my music there is no constant development as in the sonata; instead, imaginary soundscapes appear...My music is composed as if fragments were thrown together somewhat unstructured, as in dreams.'<sup>124</sup>

However, the omitted portion of the above quotation also includes the revelation that 'actually I have my own theories of structure and systematic procedure, but I wish to avoid overemphasising these'<sup>125</sup>; and in fact, even the most superficial examination of the composer's scores reveals evidence of just such systematic

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<sup>123</sup> Cf. for example Ohtake, op. cit., p. 20

<sup>124</sup> Takemitsu, transl. Kakudo and Glasow, op. cit., p. 106

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

structural thinking. One is therefore justified in making an attempt to understand, as far as is possible, this aspect of the composer's method, if only in order to demonstrate, by the extent to which such analysis falls short of total explanation, the degree to which his formal processes differ from highly determinate Western counterparts. The sub-sections below attempt to categorise some of the most obvious and consistent features of the composer's formal preoccupations – beginning with what is, even at the level of casual encounter, perhaps the most immediately striking of all.

## 2.1 Repetition as formal device

The most immediately striking formal procedure to be encountered with regularity in Takemitsu's scores throughout the whole of his compositional career is the use of repetition; in the words of one commentator, 'repetition cycles on both a small and a large scale provide a principal structural element in Takemitsu's music'<sup>126</sup>, to the extent that 'clearly, the most important factor in differentiating certain events in Takemitsu's music is repetition.'<sup>127</sup> The device is a clearly audible feature of Takemitsu's 'début' composition *Futatsu no Rento* (1950), even if no score exists to provide the listener with visual corroboration of the fact<sup>128</sup>, and is still to be found in his final completed score, the solo flute piece *Air* (1996). Especially typical of the composer is the recycling of whole 'blocks' of material with note-for-note exactitude, often with an abruptness of transition which recalls rather the techniques of the studio splice than the well-prepared recapitulations of Classical music. In other instances, the repeat may offer a transposition of the material by a given intervallic factor; elsewhere, the material may be re-presented with minor alterations of some kind, or both varied and transposed. All four of the above methods are employed in the formal organisation of the well-known *Requiem for Strings*, which dates from the composer's earliest period, and of which a schematised outline is given in Fig. 1.

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<sup>126</sup> Koozin (1988), p. 60

<sup>127</sup> Ibid., p. 69

<sup>128</sup> As Takemitsu notes in the preface to his *Litany in Memory of Michael Vyner* (1990), which he describes as a 'recomposition from memory' of *Futatsu no Rento*, the score of the latter has been lost. The title of the new work is possibly an untranslatable pun on the original: 'Rento', the Japanese version of the musical term 'lento', is a near-homophone of 'rentō', 'litany'

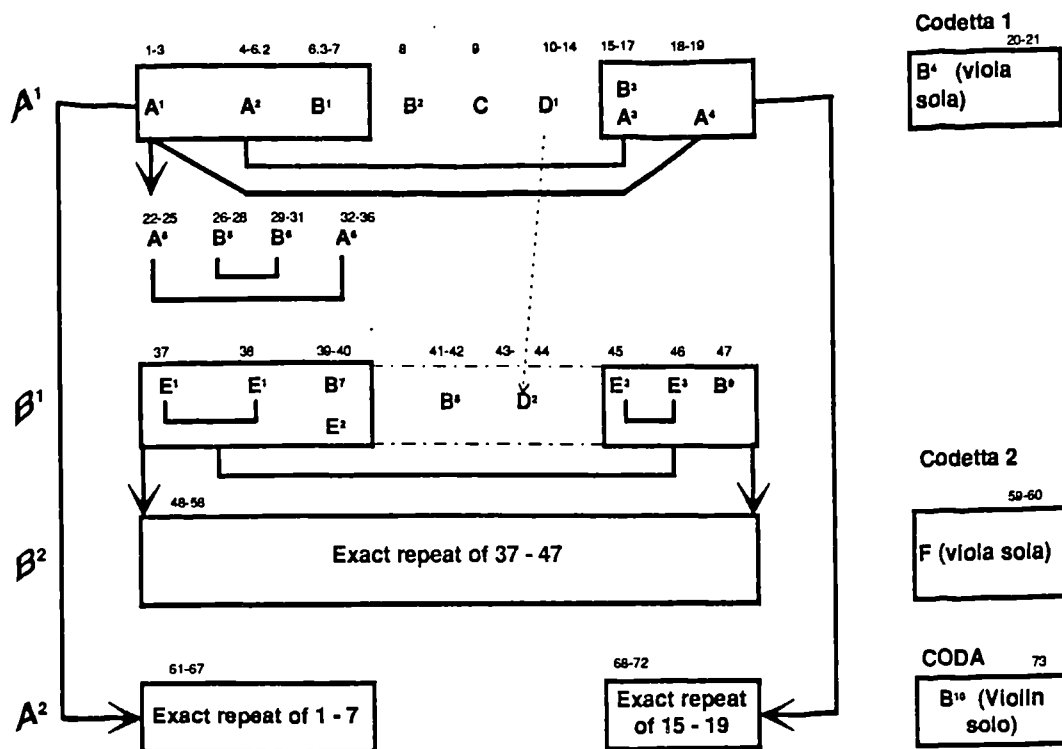


Fig. 1: Repeated sections in *Requiem for Strings*

Here, in addition to the three exact repetitions indicated as such, there are transposed repeats of bb. 10, 37 and 45 as bars 11, 38 and 46 respectively – a particular form of transposed repetition occurring immediately after its model that has something of the character of the ‘sequence’ in tonal music, and will receive more detailed consideration below.<sup>129</sup> Varied repetition is exemplified by the re-statement of the opening material with a new, more rhythmic accompaniment in bb. 22-25, which is in turn presented once more in bb. 32-36 with further variations; while transposition and variation may be seen operating together in the radical re-working of the opening material offered in bb. 18-19. One also observes here the operation of a fairly consistent rule of Takemitsu’s, namely that the longest (or sometimes, the most literal) section of repetition is a signifier of imminent closure, as if symbolising the arrival at the work’s destination, somewhat in the manner

<sup>129</sup> See Section 3.1.5

of a recapitulation: 'You go to a far place and suddenly find yourself back home without having noticed the return.'<sup>130</sup>

It requires no more than a cursory glance at Fig. 1 to realise that the sections of the work add up to rather more than the sum of its parts, and that the repetitions operate in tandem with, and reinforce, this formal articulation. Takemitsu has said that 'roughly speaking, the work makes use of a single theme and is in a free three-section form...the tempo sequence of which is Lent – Modéré – Lent'<sup>131</sup>; in other words, a no-nonsense classical 'ABA' structure of a kind described by Ozawa as 'easy for Western people to understand.'<sup>132</sup> It is easy to see how the literal repetitions in particular reinforce ternary organisation. On the one hand, the final 'A2' section consists of a literal repeat of the opening and closing bars of 'A1'; at the same time, this outer pair of repeated sections encloses an inner repetition of the middle section, 'B2' being an exact repeat of 'B1'; and, additionally, the outermost sections of 'B1' are closely related to one another by the use of varied repetition of the same material, just as the outermost sections of 'A1' had been. Finally, the three *codette* involving solo string instruments serve as landmarks to distinguish each of the three main segments, setting the seal on a structure which Ozawa describes as 'perfectly formed.'<sup>133</sup>

This is by no means the unique instance of this type of ternary organisation in Takemitsu's music; indeed, one early commentator on the composer went so far as to speak of the 'standard ABA model of construction of which he seems to be fond'<sup>134</sup>, and as late as the composer's 'third period' it is still possible to discover a predilection for the same kind of formal outline. For example, the short piano piece *Rain Tree Sketch* (1982), a typical specimen of Takemitsu's later manner, also projects something like a ternary form by means of a note-for-note repeat of the opening material, interlocking with a whole series of transposed repeats of shorter fragments of material. As Koozin has observed, the intervallic factors by which these repeated sections are transposed have been carefully selected: multiples of

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<sup>130</sup> Takemitsu, transl. Kakudo and Glasow, op. cit., p. 106

<sup>131</sup> The composer's programme note in *Sinfonī*, loc. cit.

<sup>132</sup> Takemitsu and Ozawa, op. cit., p. 146

<sup>133</sup> Ibid.

<sup>134</sup> Tircuit, Heuwell, 'Tōru Takemitsu', *Ongaku Geijutsu* 21/1 (1963), p. 15

two semitones are employed with what he calls 'whole-tone-referential' materials, and multiples of three semitones with 'octatonic-referential' materials, so that in each case the particular transposition of the mode employed remains intact despite the transformation.<sup>135</sup> Once again, the most literal repetition is immediately followed by the coda (Fig. 2).

In each of the above examples, the repeated sections add up to something like an overall pattern of organisation which can be apprehended as a 'form' in the Western sense. There are other instances in Takemitsu's music, however, in which there is no such congruence between the distribution of repetitions and the higher organisation of the work; rather, there may be instead a tension between them, or indeed in some instances, no such 'higher organisation' to speak of at all. Takemitsu has described the form of his famous 'middle period' work *November Steps* (1967) as 'eleven "steps" without any particular melodic scheme'<sup>136</sup>, yet, at the same time, identification of the passages in the work which resemble each other sufficiently to constitute repetitions yields something like the pattern shown in Fig. 3.

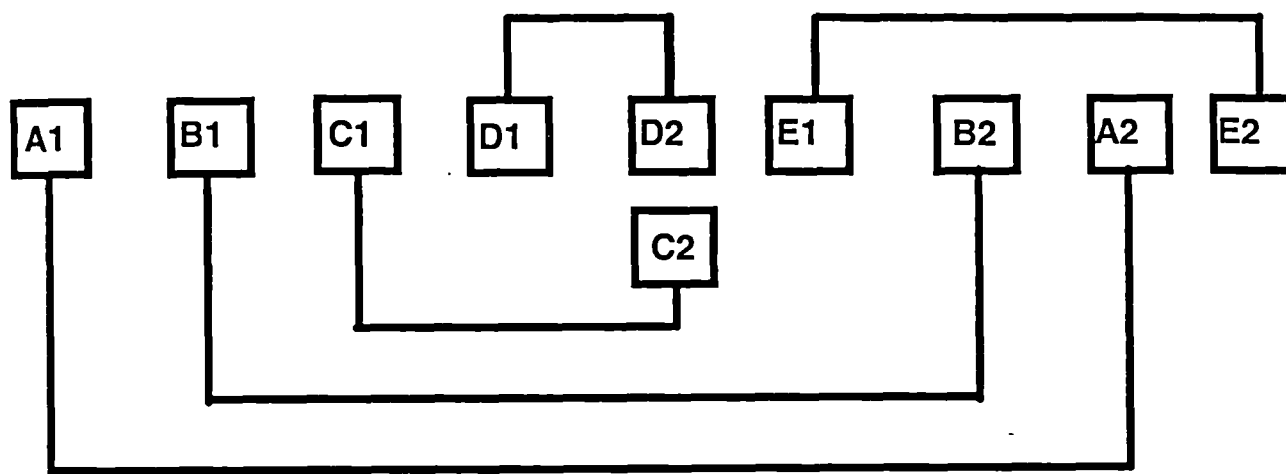


Fig. 3: Repeated sections in *November Steps*

In this case, there are no instances of the kind of 'total recall' of material observed above; Takemitsu at best here favours a kind of 'paramnesic' remembrance

<sup>135</sup> Koozin (1988), p. 237ff.

<sup>136</sup> The composer's programme note, quoted in: Takemitsu, transl. Kakudo and Glasow, op. cit., p. 88

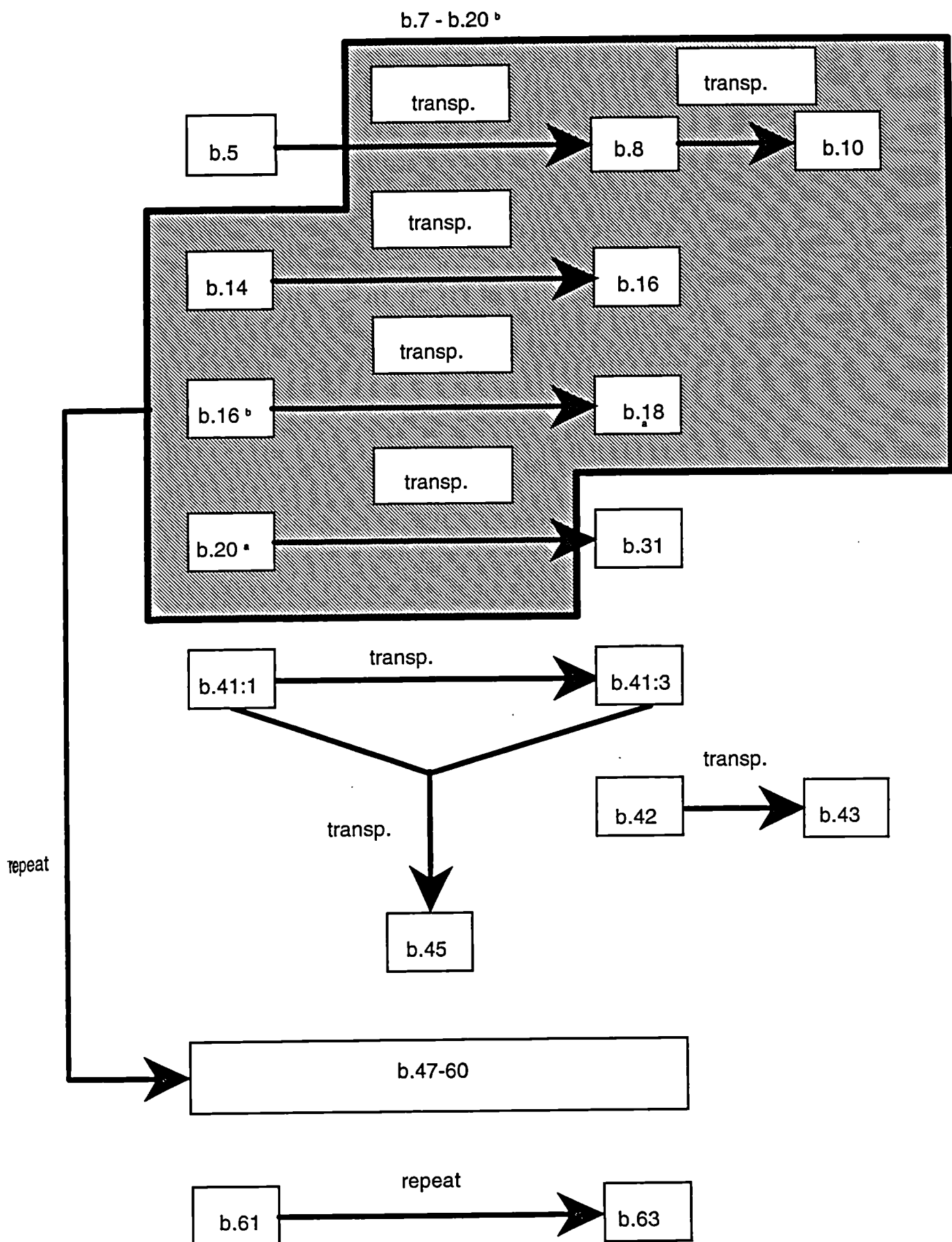


Fig. 2: Repeated sections in *Rain Tree Sketch*



of things past, in which materials always reappear transformed in some way. A2 (b. 64), for example, differs from A1 (b. 1) in rhythmic outline, instrumentation, and in the placing of the pedal 'F' in temporal relation to the other parts; while the relationship between B2 (bb. 40-43) and B1 (bb. 2-5) exploits one of the characteristic features of *November Steps*, its use of two string groups, in order to transform the material by swapping the left and right groups over, in addition to other changes. In the case of C1 (l.h. violins, b. 11) and C2 (do., b. 18), the essential relationship is one of transposition, but Takemitsu also 'thickens' the second occurrence by means of the addition of an extra voice to the harmony.<sup>137</sup> D1 (brass and woodwind, bb. 12-13) and D2 (do., bb. 18-20) are also in a transposition relationship with each other, but here the woodwind harmonies are revoiced at the second appearance, and the long-sustained first chord is given a characteristic articulation by means of overlapping repeated-note gestures. Finally, E1 (bb. 21-24) and E2 (bb. 66-67), the most tenuously-linked pair of passages, are connected only by the double pedal on D and E in the middle register. In consequence of all of these repetitions, *November Steps* reveals itself in a dual formal aspect, thereby generating a certain tension between, on the one hand, the sequence of 'eleven "steps" ' of the composer's description, and on the other, the somewhat 'arch-like' network of interleaved repeated materials shown in the above diagram, in which 'cycles of repetition at local levels [are] nested within larger cycles of recurrence' (to echo Koozin's description of *Piano Distance*).<sup>138</sup> In passing, it should perhaps also be noted that the work illustrates another of the fairly consistent 'rules' of Takemitsu's musical construction, and this time one that has analogues in the Western classical tradition: the placing of the soloists' *cadenza* immediately prior to the final *tutti* gesture; as Smaldone observes, in both *November Steps* and *Autumn* 'there are elaborate cadenza passages for both *shakuhachi* and *biwa* which seem to serve as the dramatic goal of the entire composition, followed by a closing orchestral statement.'<sup>139</sup>

Of course, it would be incorrect to assume that similar diagrams to those shown in Figs. 1-3 could be drawn up for *all* Takemitsu's scores; there are other works in which repetition is almost totally absent, which may obey their own

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<sup>137</sup> See below, section 2.2.1, for further discussion of this practice

<sup>138</sup> Koozin (1988), p. 100

<sup>139</sup> Smaldone, op. cit., p. 223

formal rules<sup>140</sup> or no rules at all. But it nevertheless remains the case that the type of construction found in these three examples is encountered with remarkable frequency throughout the composer's output, and certainly counts as one of the most original facets, or even perhaps a unique signature, of his stylistic language.

## 2.2 Alterations to repeated materials

As has already been suggested, although note-for-note repetitions are a frequently encountered component of Takemitsu's formal *schemata*, the composer more often favours recollections of material that have been transformed in some way. Some of the strategies employed for effecting such transformations have already been mentioned: transposition, for example, or the spatial interchange of material between the two instrumental groups in the special case of *November Steps*. In addition to these devices Takemitsu employs, with a fair deal of consistency, a whole armoury of methods to depart from literal recapitulations of his original materials. The sub-sections below are devoted to brief discussions of the various categories of transformation to which Takemitsu most frequently subjects the repeated materials in his works – although it should be noted that 'repeated materials' in this instance may on occasion refer to rather less substantial passages than it has been customary to note to date, sometimes, in fact, to no more than a single chord or brief harmonic progression.<sup>141</sup>

The importance of this study lies in the fact that the specific cases here under investigation, in which repetition makes it possible to make one-to-one comparisons between variant forms of the same material, can suggest the kinds of freedom that Takemitsu might *permit himself in the working-out of his musical materials* in general. Some of the devices listed below are indeed to be found in other contexts than that of literal repetition, for example in the treatment of serial materials to which reference is made in Section 3.4 of this enquiry.

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<sup>140</sup> See below, section 2.4

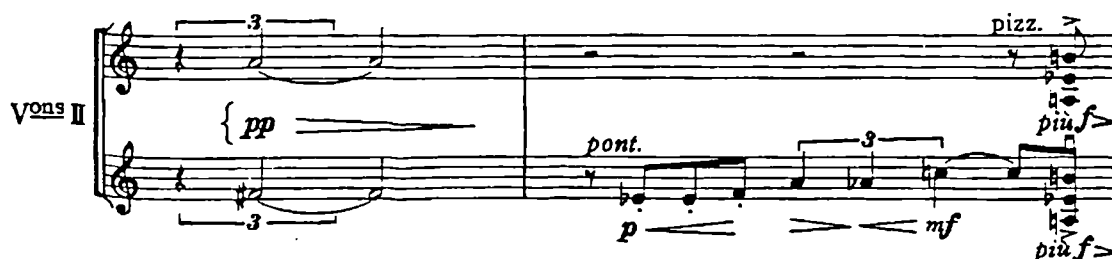
<sup>141</sup> The transformation of material by means of *retrogression* – a particular favourite of Takemitsu's during his brief flirtation with serialism in the late 1950s and early 1960s – could also have figured in this list, but it has been thought more appropriate to deal with it under a separate heading (see section 2.3)

### 2.2.1 Addition/subtraction of pitches

One of the most straightforward ways in which Takemitsu departs from literal repetition is by the addition of an extra pitch (or pitches) to vertical collections, or by the removal of the same – in other words, by *thickenings* or *filtrations* of the harmony. In his thesis on the composer's piano music, Chung-Haing Lee has suggested that Takemitsu's reasons for doing this may be based on arbitrary aural preferences:

'Webern and Schoenberg utilized schematic formulas to create sound and texture, whereas Takemitsu uses sounds as the basis out of which texture and form become the end products. If the sound he desires requires addition or elimination of a tone, Takemitsu does not hesitate to do so.'<sup>142</sup>

Whatever the composer's reasons, many of Takemitsu's scores contain the kind of 'deliberate misprint' shown in Exx. 1a and 1b. In the second of these two passages, the accented chord at the end of the first bar contains an additional C $\sharp$  and B $\flat$  that were not present in the earlier version – although it has to be admitted that the 'misprint' may not, at least in this instance, have been entirely premeditated.



Ex. 1a: *Requiem for Strings*: bb. 36-37

Similar things are also encountered in the later phases of Takemitsu's composing career. Reference has already been made (in Section 2.1) to the 'thickening' of the sequence of chords at bar 11 of *November Steps* when they reappear in bar

<sup>142</sup> Lee, Chung-Haing, op. cit., p. 36



Ex. 1b: *Requiem for Strings*: bb. 48-49

18 by the addition of an extra pitch to each harmony. In the ‘companion piece’ to *November Steps*, *Green* (1967), the essentially homophonic material played at the very beginning of the work by the strings is heard in the coda of the piece on the brass, but with subtle changes to the harmony: for example, the final two chords of the first version (Ex. 2a) are augmented by the addition of G $\flat$  and B $\sharp$  respectively when they are rehearsed at the end of the work (Ex. 2b).

Such deviations in terms of note-density may be combined with transposition operations to produce yet further alteration. Ex. 3b, from *Far Calls. Coming, Far!*, a work for violin and orchestra in Takemitsu’s later manner is essentially a transposition at T<sup>9</sup> of Ex. 3a, but all the vertical forms have been enriched by the addition of extra pitches. In passing, it may also be noted that the first three pitches of the bass part in each example project a statement of the ‘S-E-A’ motive, of which more will be said later.<sup>143</sup>

An extreme instance of the reverse process, *filtration* of the harmony, can be found in *Vers, l’Arc-en-ciel, Palma* for guitar, oboe d’amore and orchestra (1984). Here a homophonic progression mainly composed of unrelated triads is reduced to a single melodic line (Ex. 4).

Finally, Ex. 5 returns to a work from the very earliest phase of Takemitsu’s career, *Distance de Fée* for violin and piano (1951). The illustration shows the various transformations undergone by the opening material of the work at its subsequent reappearances; and amongst these, it will be observed that at the

<sup>143</sup> See below, Section 3.3.2

First system of musical notation. Top staff: Treble clef, key signature of one flat. Notes: G4 (half), A4 (quarter), B $\flat$ 4 (half). Bottom staff: Treble clef, notes: three eighth rests, then a triplet of eighth notes (G4, A4, B $\flat$ 4). Dynamics: *f* > *p* (first staff), *p* (second staff).

Second system of musical notation. Top staff: Treble clef, key signature of one flat. Notes: G4 (half), A4 (quarter), B4 (half). Bottom staff: Treble clef, notes: three eighth rests, then a triplet of eighth notes (G4, A4, B4). Dynamics: *f* > *p* (first staff), *p* (second staff).

Third system of musical notation. Top staff: Treble clef, key signature of one flat. Notes: G4 (half), A4 (quarter), B $\flat$ 4 (half). Bottom staff: Treble clef, notes: G4 (half), A4 (quarter), B $\flat$ 4 (half). Dynamics: *f* > *p* (first staff), *p* (second staff).

Fourth system of musical notation. Top staff: Treble clef, key signature of one flat. Notes: G4 (half), A4 (quarter), B $\flat$ 4 (half). Bottom staff: Bass clef, key signature of one flat. Notes: three eighth rests, then a triplet of eighth notes (G3, A3, B $\flat$ 3). Dynamics: *f* > *p* (first staff), *p* (second staff).

Ex. 2a: Green, b. 3



Ex. 2b: Green, fig. 12, bb. 1-2

second appearance of the idea, not only are two extra pitches (E $\flat$  and G $\flat$ ) added to the third chord, but the pitches are also reorganised horizontally to transform the single attack into a characteristic ‘appoggiatura’ idea, which is subsequently retained as a consistent feature of the material (Ex. 5).

### 2.2.2 Substitution of pitches

Another device frequently employed by Takemitsu to deviate from literal repetition is the substitution of other, usually adjacent pitches for certain pitches of the original form. Instances of this practice are to be found throughout Takemitsu’s compositional career, and all four of the works discussed in the previous

The musical score for Ex. 3a consists of five staves. The first four staves are in treble clef, and the fifth is in bass clef. Each staff begins with a piano (p) dynamic marking. The music features a series of notes with various accidentals (sharps, flats, naturals) and slurs. There are also some dynamic markings like 'p' and 'p < >'.

Ex. 3a: *Far Calls. Coming, Far!, F/2*

chapter, which span a total of nearly thirty years of Takemitsu's composing life, afford examples of it:

- In the example already referred to from *Distance de Fée* (Ex. 5), for instance, the right-hand part of the fifth chord in the original sequence is subjected to two arbitrary changes at its second appearance: the E $\flat$  being raised to F $\flat$ , and the A $\flat$  to C $\flat$ . The third appearance of the progression is a whole tone higher than the first two; but while the C $\flat$  of the fifth chord duly rises to an enharmonically notated C $\sharp$ , the F $\flat$  is raised only by a semitone to F $\sharp$  – an anomaly which in a

Musical score for Ex. 3b: Far Calls. Coming, Far!, F/3-4. The score consists of 11 staves. The first four staves are in treble clef, and the last seven are in bass clef. The music is in 4/8 time. Dynamics include *mf*, *p*, and *sub. p*. The score shows a sequence of notes with slurs and dynamic markings, indicating a call pattern.

Ex. 3b: *Far Calls. Coming, Far!, F/3-4*



(i) p.10, b.3



(ii) p.19, b.8



Ex. 4: *Vers, l'Arc-en-ciel, Palma*: comparison of p. 10, b. 3 with p. 19, b. 8.

8

paradoxical sense is also 'correct', since it restores the pitch to which the E $\flat$  in the original sequence would have risen had it been transposed by this intervallic factor. There is thus a certain ambiguity as to which of the several versions of this chord constitutes an 'original' or 'correct' spelling – a type of ambiguity which is the frequent result of Takemitsu's deliberate departures from literal repetition, and of which more will be said below.<sup>144</sup>

- While, in the case of the previously quoted example from *Requiem*, it was hinted that one could not discount the possibility of the 'intentional error' being the product of inaccurate typesetting, the following extract from the same score (Ex. 6) offers a more reliable text upon which to base speculations. The second bar of the example is essentially a transposition of the first up a perfect fourth, but in the uppermost of the two cello parts the transposition is inexact, the player remaining on the note 'A' for three quavers instead of rising to B $\flat$  as a literal restatement of the melodic contour would demand. The fact that the same pattern is adhered to when the passage is repeated later rules out the possibility of a typographical error on this occasion.

<sup>144</sup> See Section 2.2.10

b.1      1.)      2.)      3.)      4.)      5.)

b.20

b.29

b.40

Ex. 5: Transformations of opening material in *Distance de Fée*



Ex. 6: *Requiem for Strings*, bb. 37-38

- In *Green*, as already stated, the material exposed by strings at the beginning of the work reappears on brass instruments in the coda. Comparison of the very first chord in the piece (marked 'A' in Ex. 7a) with its equivalent in this brass recapitulation (Ex. 7b) shows that the two are not quite identical: the D $\sharp$  in the bass of the first version is arbitrarily raised to E $\flat$  in the second.
- Lastly, in *Far Calls. Coming, Far!*, essentially the same two- or three-chord progression reappears on a number of occasions during the work, as summarized in Ex. 8. In addition to undergoing transposition, this harmonic sequence is subjected to various forms of minor transformation as it reappears, including the type of pitch-substitution described in this chapter: in the versions used at K/4 and K/5, a literal transposition of the second chord would yield an E $\flat$  as the second pitch from the top, whereas it will be seen that this pitch has been arbitrarily lowered to D $\flat$  instead.

While in these last two instances the pitch-substitution is perceived primarily vertically, as an alteration to the resulting harmony, it also affects the melodic contour of individual voices contributing to that harmony, as can be seen more clearly in the case of Ex. 6. Substitution of pitches can therefore be seen as operating in both the vertical and the horizontal dimension in these instances. However, there are other cases in which the horizontal dimension is absent, as for example when the modification occurs to a single isolated vertical event; and, equally, cases where the vertical dimension is absent, when the transformation affects a single melodic line, and is perceived primarily as a horizontal disruption. Scored as it is for two solo flutes, the 1959 work *Masque* is especially preoccupied with linear projections



Ex. 7a: *Green*, b. 1

of ideas, and examples of the latter class of pitch-substitution, operating in the horizontal domain, are frequently encountered in this score. Some of these will be noted in due course, when the occasion arises to discuss the work's underlying pitch organisation in the relevant chapter below.<sup>145</sup>

A special case of pitch-substitution is that in which certain constituent pitches of a vertical collection are transposed into a different octave, effecting a *revoicing* of the resultant harmony. In the illustration from *Distance de Fée* quoted above, for example (Ex. 5), the lower E $\flat$  in the right-hand part of the second chord is replaced by the B $\flat$  a perfect twelfth above – not an octave transposition in this instance it is true, but rather the selection of a different pitch for octave doubling. This revised voicing of the harmony is then retained when the whole sequence is transposed up a tone for the third statement. The end result achieved by these

<sup>145</sup> See Section 3.4

The musical score consists of five staves. The first staff is in treble clef, 10/16 time, with a key signature of one flat. It contains a melodic line with a *mf* dynamic and a crescendo leading to a *p* dynamic. Above the staff are the letters 'B' and 'C' with a horizontal line underneath. The second staff is in treble clef, 10/16 time, with a key signature of two sharps. It contains a complex melodic line with a *p* dynamic, an *espr.* marking, and a crescendo leading to a *mf* dynamic, followed by a decrescendo to a *p* dynamic. The third staff is in treble clef, 10/16 time, with a key signature of one flat. It contains a complex melodic line with a *p* dynamic, an *espr.* marking, and a crescendo leading to a *mf* dynamic, followed by a decrescendo to a *p* dynamic. The fourth staff is in treble clef, 10/16 time, with a key signature of one flat. It contains a complex melodic line with a *p* dynamic, an *espr.* marking, and a crescendo leading to a *mf* dynamic, followed by a decrescendo to a *p* dynamic. The fifth staff is in bass clef, 10/16 time, with a key signature of one flat. It contains a complex melodic line with a *p* dynamic, an *espr.* marking, and a crescendo leading to a *mf* dynamic, followed by a decrescendo to a *p* dynamic.

Ex. 7b: Green, fig. 11, b. 4

twin operations of transposition and revoicing is achieved simultaneously in the example below (Ex. 9) from *To the Edge of Dream*, a much later work for guitar and orchestra; here the second chord is both a transposition up a minor third and a revoicing of the first.

Revoicing aggregates containing a freely chromatic collection of pitches such as this may effect quite radical changes to the sounding result, a resource which

P. 1, bar 3                      C/ 2                      E/ 3

E/ 4                      E/ 5                      E/ 6

K/ 4                      I/ 3                      K/ 5

Ex. 8: *Far Calls. Coming, Far!:* versions of recurrent harmonic progression

Ex. 9: *To the Edge of Dream*, letter M, b. 2

Takemitsu, like so many other twentieth-century composers, has not been slow to exploit. Some of the possibilities opened up by revoicing one of his favoured harmonic types in this way will be discussed in more detail in a later section.<sup>146</sup>

### 2.2.3 Combination of above

The techniques described in the preceding two sections may of course be combined in order further to distort the character of material at subsequent repetitions. In the example previously quoted from *Green*, for instance (Exx. 7a and 7b), the

<sup>146</sup> See below, Section 3.1.2

number of pitches in the fifth and sixth chords of the progression (labelled 'B' and 'C' in Ex. 7b) is increased from six to seven, while at the same time the F $\sharp$  in the fifth chord is chromatically lowered to F $\flat$ . Similarly, comparison of the two passages from *Far Calls. Coming, Far!* shown in Ex. 10 below again reveals the simultaneous use of addition and substitution of pitches in order to depart from a literal reiteration of the same material. The second version is obviously based on a transposition of the first upwards by a semitone; however, there are three departures from a strict transposition in the case of the second chord: the F $\flat$  in the treble is an addition that has no counterpart in the original version, and the B $\flat$  in the bass is a substitution for the B $\sharp$  that this transposition of the material would otherwise demand (the third chord of the second version seems totally unrelated to its counterpart in the original, even within the liberal limits permitted by the kind of analysis here adopted.)

Something of an extreme instance of the transformation of a single harmony by means of processes of addition and subtraction of pitches, with or without simultaneous substitution of alternatives for other pitches, is afforded by the example from the mid-period work *Coral Island* shown below (Ex. 11), which charts the various appearances of what are essentially progressive transformations of an original harmonic type.<sup>147</sup> While certain pitches remain constant between one form and the next, or reappear in a different register (as indicated by the connecting lines), other pitches are removed or added, and still others replaced by alternatives. The cumulative result is something like the musical equivalent of a chain of syllogistically related propositions: each form is obviously related to the next in a demonstrable fashion, but the forms at the extreme ends of the chain of transformation are so radically different as to bear almost no discernible relationship to one another.

#### 2.2.4 Global transposition of one part of pitch-succession relative to another

Examination of the transformations to which the fifth chord in the example from *Distance de Fée* (Ex. 5) is subjected reveals another of the strategies employed

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<sup>147</sup> Wilson in fact, comparing all chords founded on D $\flat$  and G $\flat$  throughout this work, posits an 'Ur-chord' for the entire piece, since so many of them contain F $\sharp$  and B $\flat$  in the bass as well, although these thirds in the bass do not add to tertian relationships but serve to 'diffuse' the bass/root function (op. cit., p. 171)



I/ 3

A.

I/ 4

B.

Ex. 10: *Far Calls. Coming, Far!*; comparison of bb. 3 & 4 of letter I

by Takemitsu to avoid literal repetition. Here, the left-hand part of the harmony is transposed down a minor third when the progression is repeated, while the right-hand part remains at the original pitch (although with two pitches altered as described in 2.2.2 above.) This particular aberration not only reveals another facet of Takemitsu's compositional rationale with regard to deviation from a previously established model; it also says something about his harmonic thinking, about the manner in which harmony is frequently conceived in terms of superimposed, semi-autonomous strata – in this instance, divided between the player's hands, and treated as independent units for purposes of further transformation.<sup>148</sup> A similar situation obtains in the two examples below, which are taken from the later work

<sup>148</sup> See below, Section 3.1.4, for fuller discussion of this practice of harmonic 'stratification' in Takemitsu's music

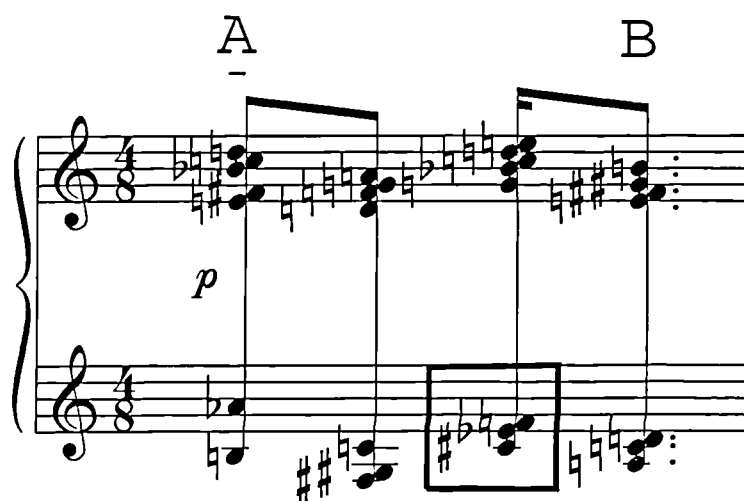
a.)      b.)      c.)      d.)      e.)      f.)

a.) p. 36, b.1 (Accumulation II)      d.) Poem I, b. 21  
 b.) Poem I, b.13      e.) Poem I, b. 33  
 c.) Poem II, b. 21      f.) Poem II, b. 18

**Ex. 11: Process of harmonic transformation in *Coral Island***

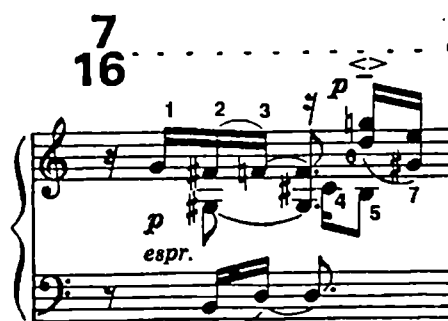
*Asterism* (1967) for piano and orchestra. The second passage, for brass (Ex. 12b) is essentially a transposition down a whole tone of the first (Ex. 12a), for solo piano, and it will be observed that the implicit vertical division of the harmony between the player's hands is echoed in the manner in which it is the 'left-hand' part of the third chord which is selected for transposition down a whole tone further still at its reappearance. At the same time, the chord is also 'filtered' in that the required B $\flat$  is absent in the second version.

The above examples illustrate the process of selecting one segment of a vertical pitch collection and transposing it by a different intervallic factor from the remainder when it is repeated. In the same manner that the concept of *pitch substitution* described above was enlarged to apply to horizontal as well as vertical collections, however, the concept under scrutiny at present may likewise be extended to cover occasions in which a *melodic* succession may be repeated with one section presented at the different transposition from the remainder. In Takemitsu's 1984 work *Orion* for cello and piano, for instance, one of the recurrent thematic materials comprises a descending five-note figure followed by a very 'Messiaenic'-sounding descending



Ex. 12a: *Asterism*, b. 17

tritone. At various points in the work, the intervallic relationship between the first note of the latter and the last note of the former may be a minor tenth above (Ex. 13a), a perfect eleventh above (Ex. 13b), or a semitone lower (Ex. 13c). In other words, the tritone conclusion is treated as an independent unit and transposed globally relative to the rest of the theme, just as certain segments of the vertical harmony had been in the previous two examples.



Ex. 13a: *Orion*, b. 34

## 2.2.5 Substitution of completely different harmony under same melody note

In certain instances the transformations which vertical forms undergo upon

*p dolce, legato*

*p dolce, legato*

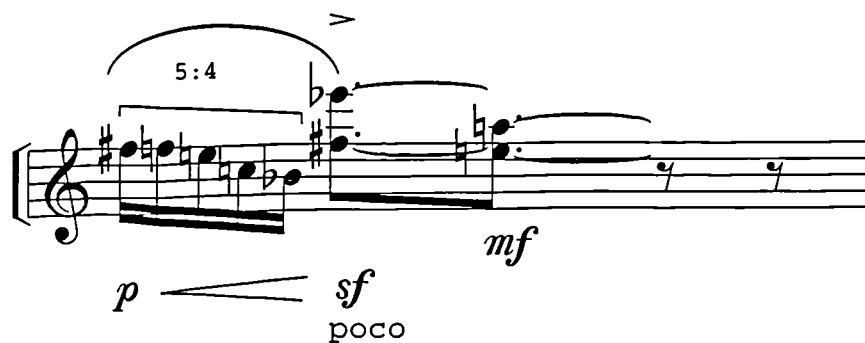
*p dolce, legato*

*p dolce, legato*

*p dolce, legato*

Ex. 12b: *Asterism*, b. 23

repetition may take such extreme forms that only the upper melodic voice remains unchanged. An example may be found in the two passages from *Green* quoted in Exx. 7a and 7b. Although it has been shown that chords 1, 5 and 6 in the second version of this progression are related to their equivalents in the first by means of specific techniques of modification, it would require a very liberal interpretation of the ground rules indeed to demonstrate a similar connection for chords 2 to 4 inclusive. Admittedly it is true that, while not directly related to their equivalents in the earlier version of the progression, these chords are related to other harmonies in that progression that also happen to be recurrent vertical types throughout the



Ex. 13b: *Orion*, b. 54

Ex. 13c: *Ibid.*, bb. 68-69

piece<sup>149</sup>; thus chords 2 and 3 project the same [0,2,3,5,6,8] set as chord 4 in the original version, and chord 4 the inverted [0,1,3,5,7,9] set of chord 1. But the fact that the harmonies chosen to underpin the melodic line at this point belong to types found elsewhere in the score does not militate against the fact that they are not the same harmonic types that were proper to these melodic notes at their previous appearance, and it is thus more profitable to think of the second version as a *reharmonisation* of the melodic line of the first than as any form of consistent transformation. The following pair of examples, from Takemitsu's 1966 work *The*

<sup>149</sup> In other words, are what will later be referred to as 'iconic' harmonies; cf. Section 3.1.7 below

*Dorian Horizon* (Ex. 14a and 14b), reveal a similar instance in which the uppermost part remains intact at its reappearance, but what happens beneath it undergoes radical alteration.

Ex. 14a: *The Dorian Horizon*, b. 97

Such a method of reworking suggests that, in these instances at least, Takemitsu considers the upper melodic line as an independent stratum to which underlying 'harmonies' are added in a quite old-fashioned way; a view which finds

Ex. 14b: Ibid., b. 127

further corroboration when the pentatonic upper part of Exx. 7a and 7b undergoes further 'reharmonisation' in the course of its transformations in the course of both *Green* and *November Steps*, as will be illustrated later.<sup>150</sup>

## 2.2.6 Interpolation/omission of material

The kind of process examined in Section 2.2.1, in which pitches are added to or subtracted from vertical progressions, could be said to have an analogue in

<sup>150</sup> See below, Section 7.2

the horizontal dimension in the shape of another of Takemitsu's favourite ploys in dealing with repeated materials: the omission of certain materials altogether from the sequence of musical events, or the corresponding interpolation of new ones. Takashi Funayama, for instance, has noted that the six-note progression played by 'cellos, harp and bass clarinet in bars 4-5 of *Far Calls. Coming, Far!* (D -  $\text{E}\flat$  -  $\text{E}\natural$  - F -  $\text{A}$  -  $\text{C}\sharp$ ) is actually built around the nucleus of the composer's 'S-E-A' motive ( $\text{E}\flat$  -  $\text{E}\natural$  -  $\text{A}$ ) – the surrounding pitches thus being interpolations.<sup>151</sup> This instance in fact affords a glimpse of Takemitsu's application of this kind of technique in a different context from that of literal repetition – in this case, in the handling of one of his favourite motivic shapes.<sup>152</sup>

An instance of the same kind of process at work in the more specific case of a deviation from literal repetition of materials may be found in one of the examples already quoted: in Ex. 5, from *Distance de Fée*, it will be observed that the fourth harmony in the original progression is omitted at both subsequent restatements. And, at first sight at least, Exx. 15a and 15b from *Green* might appear to provide an example of the corollary to this kind of omission of materials, the interpolation of new ones. Here it would seem that the version shown in Ex. 15a is not only given a much more incisive rhythmic profile when it reappears in the version shown in Ex. 15b, but also expanded by means of the interpolated chord 'X'. (This chord incidentally belongs to the 'verticalised pentatonic' category frequently encountered in Takemitsu's music, of which more will be said later.<sup>153</sup>)

This, at least, is the interpretation one would be inclined to ascribe to events on the basis of the temporal order in which they unfold within the context of the score of *Green* alone. However, the passage quoted in Ex. 15b is essentially a rescoring of fig. G, bb. 7-8 of *Réflexion*, part of Takemitsu's gigantic *Arc* for piano and orchestra; and since this latter work was written between 1963 and 1966, it would probably be more correct to regard this form as the 'original' version, and Ex. 15a as a telescoped reworking of it, even though it is the latter which happens to appear first in this particular score. This difficulty in deciding to which of the various forms of Takemitsu's repeated materials one should grant 'primogeniture' is one of several

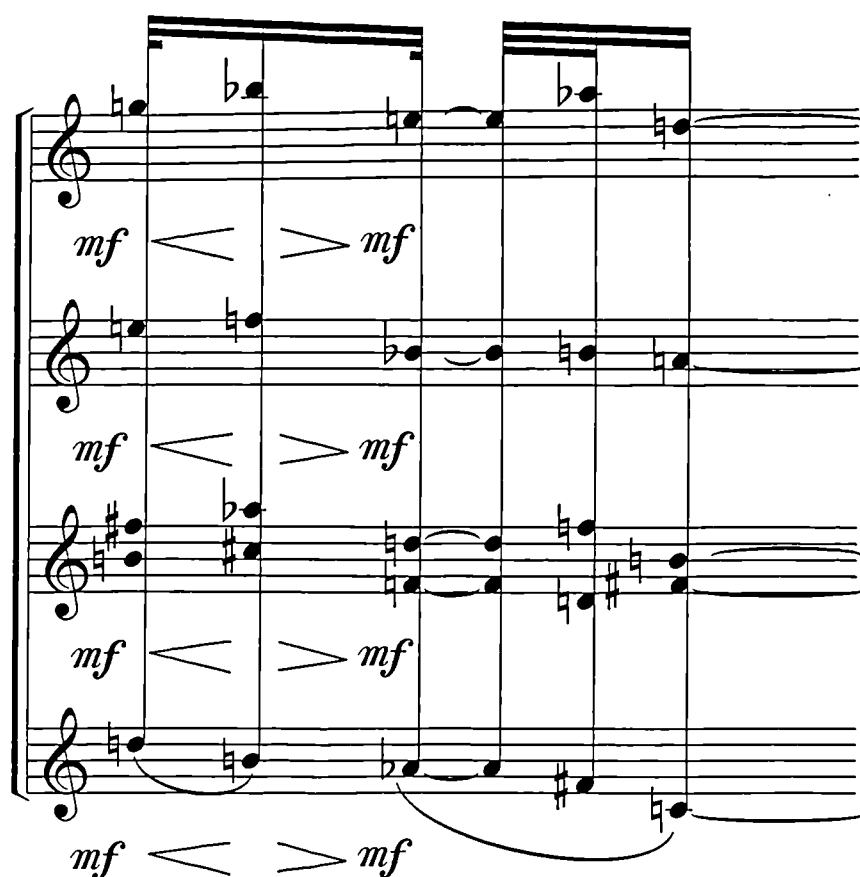
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<sup>151</sup> Funayama, Takashi: 'Takemitsu Tōru Kenkyū Nōto 3', p. 64

<sup>152</sup> For more details of the 'S-E-A' motive, see below, Section 3.3.2

<sup>153</sup> See below, Section 3.1.1





Ex. 15a: *Green*, fig. 5, b. 1

types of ambiguity in which his practices in this area involve the analyst, which will be discussed more fully later.<sup>154</sup> A similar interpretative difficulty arises with the following instance from *Far Calls. Coming, Far!* (Ex. 16). Since the appearance of this passage in the score precedes that of the two progressions quoted above in Ex. 10, it might be assumed that the latter are expansions of the original by means of the interpolation of an intermediate chord; but the fact that the later versions are harmonised statements of Takemitsu's 'S-E-A' motive grants them the status of thematic events, and the earlier version that of an elliptical commentary with the second chord omitted. Once again, therefore, the actual constructional 'logic' of Takemitsu's thinking runs in a direction counter to that of the temporal sequence of events as they appear in the finished score.

<sup>154</sup> See Section 2.2.10

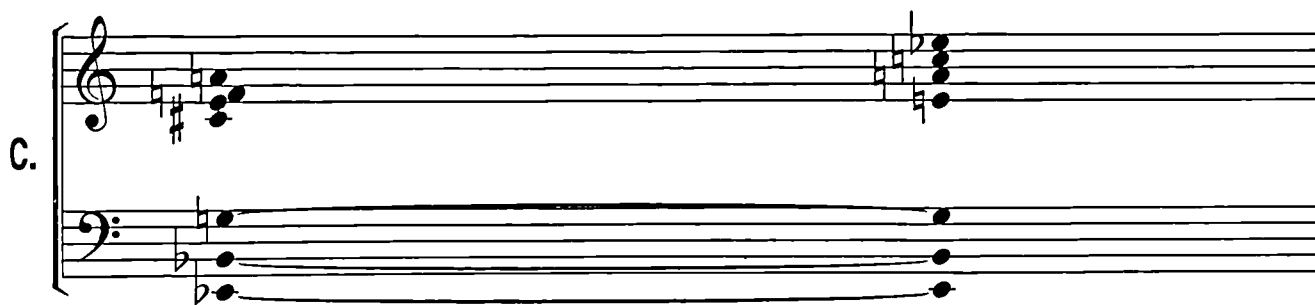


Ex. 15b: Ibid., fig. 11, b. 2

### 2.2.7 Juxtaposition of unrelated materials

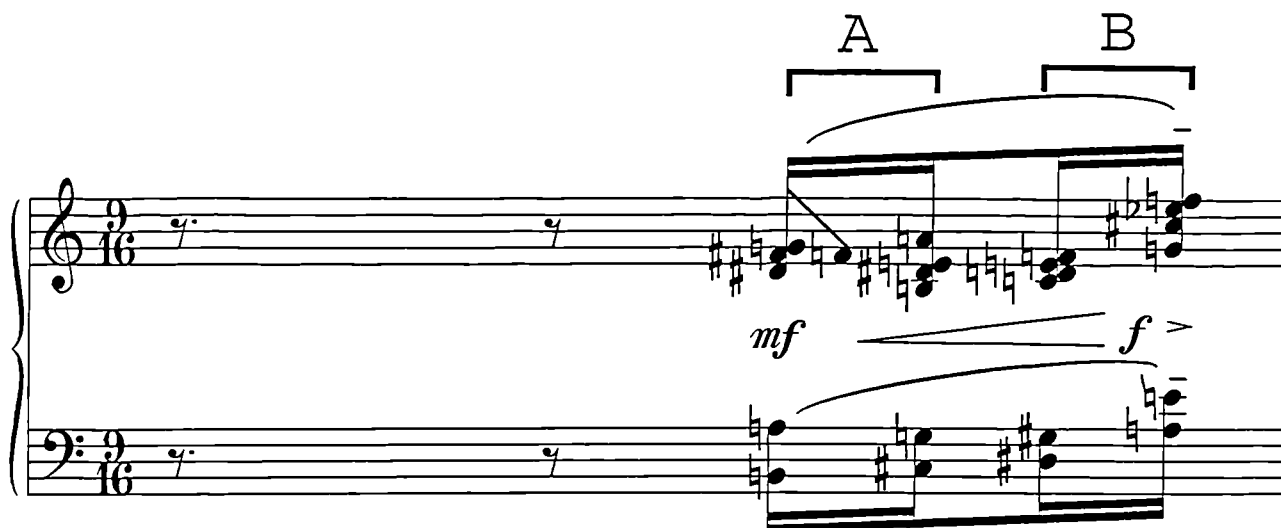
In one or two instances, Takemitsu repeats materials which have previously appeared in quite unrelated contexts in juxtaposition with one another. For example, the four-chord idea from *Green* shown in Ex. 17a is a conflation of two pairs of harmonies, each of which has previously appeared in a quite separate context. The second pair of chords (B) is simply a transposition up an octave of two chords from the work's opening that have already been quoted in Ex. 2a above. The first two chords (A) are equivalent to the second pair in the progression shown in Ex. 17b; these, in turn, are a transposition down a whole-tone of the first pair, and the latter in their turn derive from two chords given out by the woodwind two bars earlier, shown in Ex. 17c. By applying pitch-class analysis to these chords, it is

E/ 6



Ex. 16: *Far Calls. Coming, Far!*, fig. E, b. 6

possible to trace their derivation one stage further back, since they are equivalent to chords 3 and 1 of the main 'theme' of the work (quoted in Ex. 7a) – chords which both project types ([0,2,3,4,6,8] and [0,1,3,5,7,9]<sup>155</sup> respectively) heard consistently throughout the rest of the work.



Ex. 17a: *Green*, fig. 4, b. 4 (celesta)

A similar example of this technique of 'pasting together' materials previously

<sup>155</sup> I.e. the inversion of the bracketed set



Ex. 17b: Ibid., fig. 2, b. 1 (celesta)

heard in quite separate contexts may be found in Takemitsu's *Orion* of seventeen years later. Here it is once again a question of two pairs of chords derived from different sources being spliced together – the characteristic rising anacrusis gestures of the highlighted chords in Exx. 18a and 18b being placed one after the other in Ex. 18c. Furthermore, the ordering of the two pairs in the restatement is once again the reverse of the order in which they have already made their appearance in the score.

### 2.2.8 Alterations to pitch-succession

Examination of certain other instances of the manner in which Takemitsu handles the restatement of previously exposed materials reveals that he is uninhibited by any *quasi*-‘Schoenbergian’ notions about the ‘integrity of the series’, and is as happy to depart from a previously established pitch-ordering as he is to perform any of his other acts of arbitrary deviation. An example of Takemitsu’s practice in this respect can be found in the illustration below, taken from the second movement of *Pause Ininterrompue*, a solo piano piece dating from 1959. It is clear at once that all the vertical events of the first version (Ex. 19a) are present in the second (Ex. 19b), but the order in which they succeed one another appears to

Fl. 2

A- fl.,  
cor. angl.

Cl.

1, 2

Bsns.

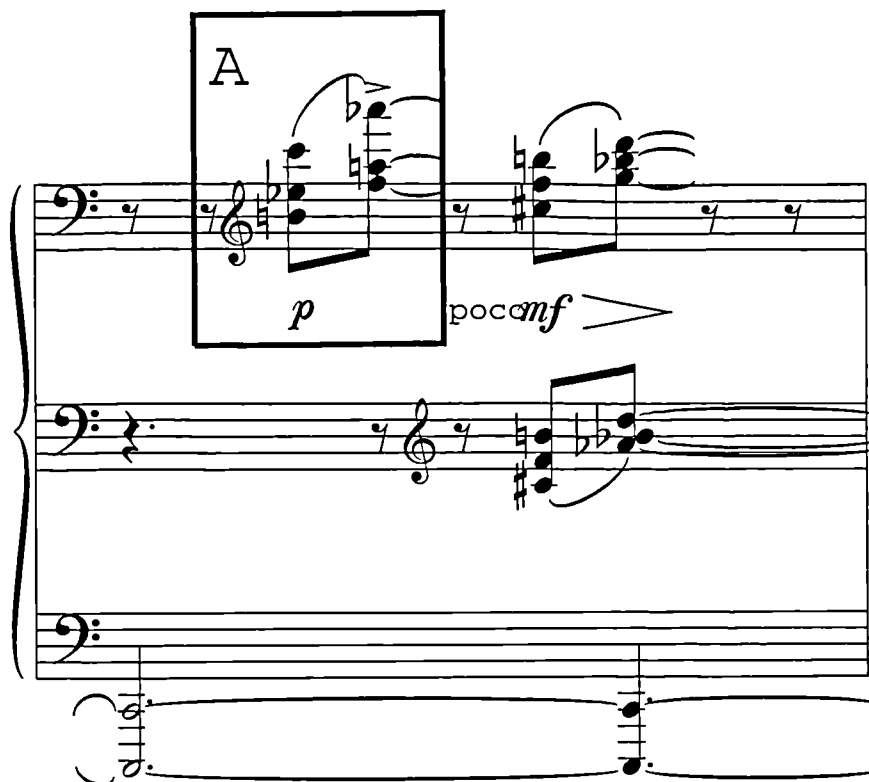
3.

The musical score consists of five staves. The first staff (Fl. 2) is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 3/4 time signature. It contains a single note, F#4, marked 'dolce pp sempre'. The second staff (A- fl., cor. angl.) is in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb) and contains a half note, Bb4, marked 'dolce pp'. The third staff (Cl.) is in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb) and contains a half note, Bb4, marked 'dolce pp'. The fourth staff (1, 2) is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and contains a half note, F#4, marked 'dolce pp'. The fifth staff (Bsns.) is in bass clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb) and contains a half note, Bb3, marked 'dolce pp'. All staves have a crescendo hairpin leading to a 'p' dynamic marking.

Ex. 17c: Ibid., fig. 1, b. 4

have been randomly reshuffled: if one were to label the four chords of the original version 1, 2+3 (simultaneously), 4, then the second version presents the succession 3+4 (simultaneously), 1, 2 – a kind of ‘free retrograde.’ Since each chord is specific to one of the pianist’s hands, and remains assigned to that hand in the reordered version, the effect of the latter is rather an improvisatory one, as if the pianist were simply reshuffling a pre-established collection of fixed musical objects.

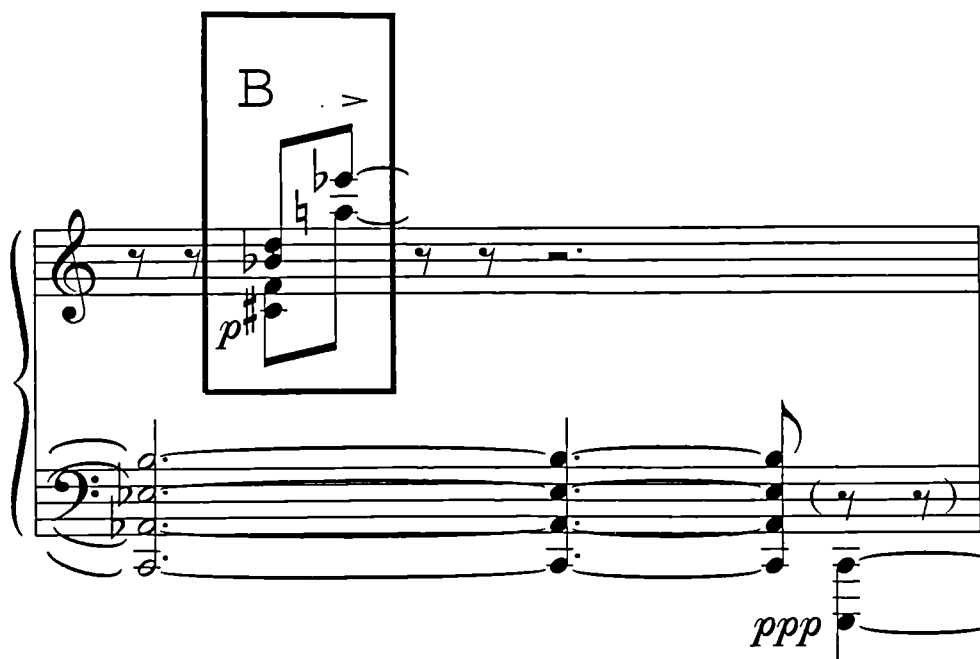
In contrast to the above reordering of block chords, Ex. 20, from the much later piano work *Rain Tree Sketch* (1982) charts the various reorderings of a linear succession of pitches, heard as the upper line of the very first bar of that work. The techniques of transformation to which this seven-note idea is subjected, such as



Ex. 18a: *Orion*, b. 3

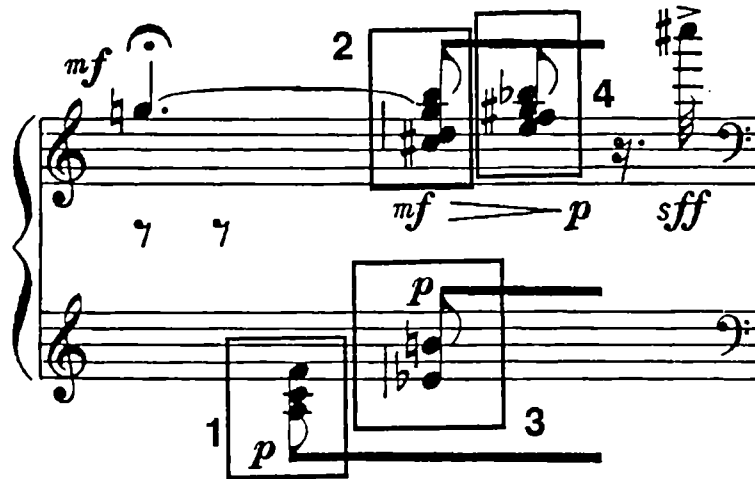
the extrapolation of certain sequences of pitches to form harmonic or contrapuntal accompaniments to the remainder, recall serial practice; but the radical alterations to the order in which the pitches appear in certain examples is a departure from the classical application of that particular method.

Finally, a very specific form of departure from a previously established succession of pitches is illustrated by the example below from *Asterism*, where, in the course of restating a series of harmonies, pitches are exchanged between one chord and the next. Ex. 21b is a compressed restatement of the material shown in Ex. 21a, which consists of a four-chord harmonic progression followed by a transposition of itself a fifth lower; but the Eb of the fourth chord in the earlier version is transferred to the third chord in the reworking for solo piano, and a corresponding operation is performed on the Ab of the eighth chord at the equivalent point in the second half of the sequence.



Ex. 18b: Ibid., b. 7

Ex. 18c: Ibid., b. 36



Ex. 19a: *Pause Ininterrompue* II, bb. 12-13

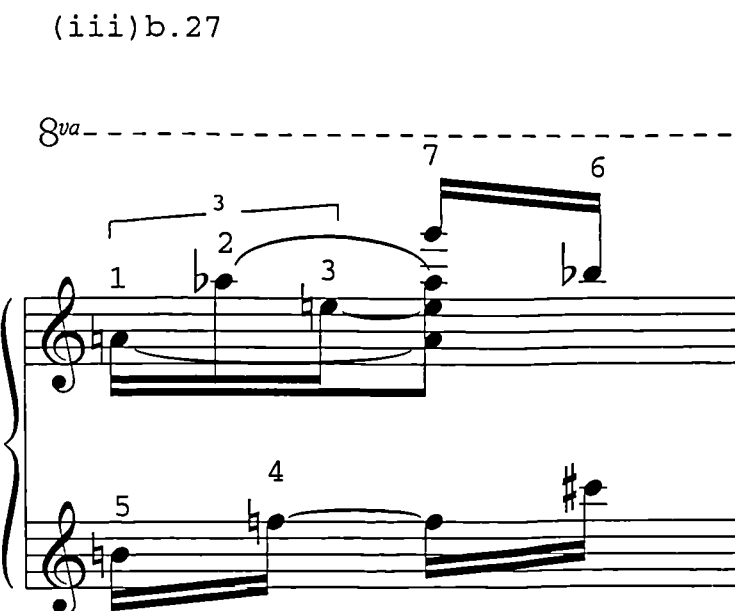
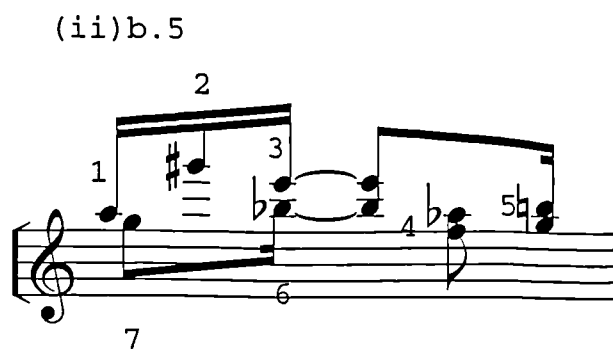
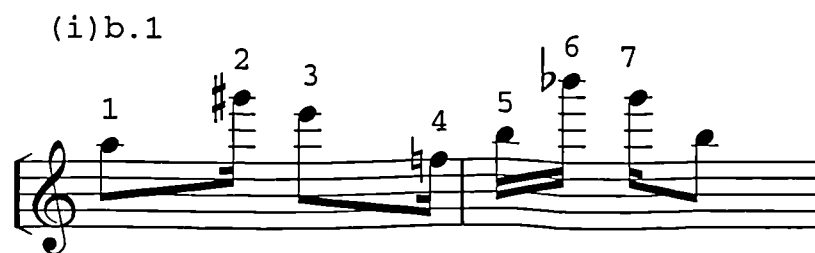


Ex. 19b: *Ibid.*, b. 45

### 2.2.9 Relationships in terms of common features

All the transformations to repeated materials so far enumerated have operated essentially in the sphere of pitch-materials. Occasionally, however, one comes across passages in Takemitsu's music that bear striking similarities to one another, despite the fact that there appears to be little or no discernible relationship in terms of pitch content. In order to describe this more diffuse variety of kinship,





**Ex. 20: *Rain Tree Sketch*: transformations of opening idea**

it becomes necessary to invoke something like the type of ‘paradigmatic analysis’ favoured by certain scholars, and list the common features of those passages that are connected in spirit rather than according to the letter of the score. By this

8va-----

*p*

*loco*

8va-----

*mp*

*loco*

Ex. 21a: *Asterism*, bb. 23-26

8va-----

8va-----

*mf*  
legato

Ex. 21b: *Ibid.*, b. 60

means, it becomes possible to describe as altered repetitions passages that at first sight would appear to have little in common with one another. For example, any

Picc., fl., cl., celesta

The image displays three staves of musical notation, each with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The first staff is for Picc., fl., cl., celesta, with a dynamic marking of *p* at the beginning and *ff* at the end, and a bracket labeled '5' above it. The second staff is for Fl., cl., hrp., glock., with a dynamic marking of *p* at the beginning and *ff* at the end. The third staff is for Ob., with a dynamic marking of *p* at the beginning and *ff* at the end, and a bracket labeled '6' above it. The notation includes various notes, rests, and accidentals, with a crescendo hairpin connecting the *p* and *ff* markings on each staff.

Ex. 22a: *Asterism*, b. 13

form of analysis which takes pitch-content as its starting point would be hard pressed to discover common ground between the three examples shown in Ex. 22.

At the same time, however, the eye and ear immediately perceive connections of other kinds between the three examples. These common features may be sum-

Picc., cl.

8va-----

Ob., cl.

Celesta 8va----- 5

Trp. 6

Ex. 22b: Ibid., b. 19

marised as follows:

1. An uppermost figure, comprised of homorhythmic harmonies in the first two examples, and of 1-to-3-note attacks in the third example, rising to a climax on a high note;

Xyl., mar.

8va

5

5

*mf*

7

*p* *f*

Pno.

5

Ex. 22c: Ibid., b. 39

2. A second figure, again of homorhythmic harmonies in the first two examples, and of 1-to-2-note attacks in the third, again climaxing on a high note. Rhythmically, the above two figures each project in even values different fractions of the pulse, clashing against one another in polyrhythmic relationships: four against five in the first two examples, five against seven in the second<sup>156</sup>;
3. A repeated note figure, reiterating a monotone in the first example, a dyad in the third, and a chord in the second, and projecting in even values a further subdivision of the pulse: six in the first two examples, ten in the third.

<sup>156</sup> Jeong Woo Jin, in his dissertation on Takemitsu, makes the similar point that the constant use of the first of these 'polyrhythmic' combinations – four-against-five – suggests a certain 'hidden control, maintaining a certain thematicism' in the otherwise 'free' material for vibraphone on p. 5 of *Rain Tree*. See: Jin, Jeong Woo: *Comparative analysis of Takemitsu's recent works 'Rain Tree' and 'Rain Spell'/'Ta-ryung' ('Lamentation')*, an original piece for chamber orchestra (Ph.D Dissertation, University of California at Los Angeles, 1987), p. 9

A similar situation arises with a recurrent gesture in the rather later score for violin and piano, *From Far Beyond Chrysanthemums and November Fog* (1983). While the examples shown in Ex. 23 are not exactly identical in terms of pitch materials, it is once again possible to draw up a 'feature list' which unites them all as points of convergence of a number of other preoccupations:

1. Each contains a 'rocking' ostinato figure on the interval of a diminished fourth;
2. Each combines the above figure with a drone-like, sustained pitch;
3. The above two elements, combined together, always project an [0,1,4] pitch collection, either in original or inverted form;
4. One of the pitches involved is always an open string of the violin. In the case of the example from b. 6, it is one of the notes of the ostinato figure (A $\sharp$ ); in the other examples, it is the sustained pitch against which the ostinato is counterpointed (D $\flat$  or A $\flat$ .)

Consideration of such less pitch-specific aspects of the musical surface might possibly serve to illuminate Takemitsu's compositional thinking on occasions where stable pitch collections or 'thematic' ideas do not obviously feature in the musical logic. For example, although it includes a couple of verbatim repetitions of material in its closing pages, the 1973 piano work *For Away* is largely devoid of any recognisable 'thematic' shapes or significant pitch collections, and would appear to defy any kind of analysis that sought such morphologically fixed units as its basis. But even a cursory inspection of the score reveals that, if certain gestures are described in less rigid terms than those of mere pitch-identity, their reappearance throughout the score immediately becomes apparent, revealing the clarity and consistency of the musical argument. A pair of such gestures appear at the very opening of the work, which, as Timothy Koozin has pointed out, begins with the 'presentation of two motivic elements which will be significant throughout the piece. The first of these involves a succession of grace notes' while the second is a two-note figure 'which vacillates back and forth between the members of a tritone dyad.'<sup>157</sup> One may amplify Koozin's description to observe that the manner in which these grace-note figurations are presented is also a recurrent 'feature' in this

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<sup>157</sup> Koozin (1988), p. 146

Bar 6

pp

mf

p

Bar 16, bar 49

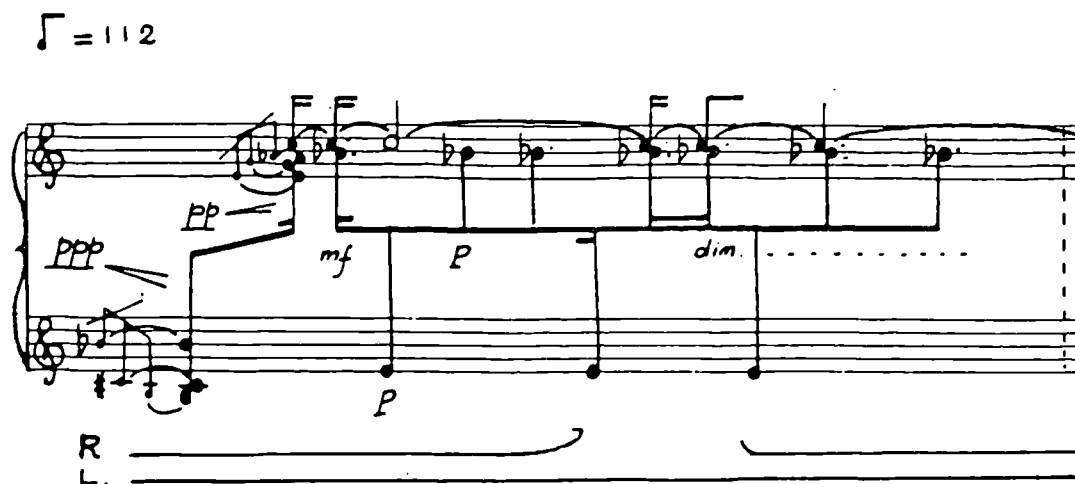
Bar 66

**Ex. 23: Recurrent patterns in *From Far Beyond Chrysanthemums* and *November Fog***

work – an arpeggio-like formation in one hand followed by a similar arpeggiation for the other hand in contrary motion to the first (Ex. 24.)

By defining these two gestures in such general terms, it becomes possible to conceive of a whole series of events in the score – from the recurrent grace-note arpeggiations to the ‘gamelan’-like figurations revolving around tritone intervals<sup>158</sup>

<sup>158</sup> Quoted below, in Section 3.1.8, Ex. 98



Ex. 24: *For Away*, opening

– as projections of the same essential ideas, so that the apparently ‘amorphous’ whole now takes on a conceptual, and indeed aurally perceptible unity.

#### 2.2.10 Ambiguous and reversible nature of above

In dealing with Takemitsu’s use of wholesale omission or interpolation of materials to effect changes to repeated passages<sup>159</sup>, it was observed that the analysis of any two passages on these terms tended to be reversible; that is to say, passage *a* could equally well be considered a variant of *b* with extra material incorporated, as *b* a variant of *a* with material omitted. It was also seen that the order of events in the score was no guide as to which of the two forms might be considered the ‘original’ and which the ‘variant’; in the example from *Green*, the derivation of the material from the composer’s earlier work *Arc* tended to suggest that it was the second of the two appearances in the score which should be considered the ‘prime’ version. Similarly, passages related to one another by means of several of the other categories of transformation listed above may be susceptible to ‘reversible’ interpretation of this kind. In other words, if a harmony *b* consists of harmony *a* plus added pitches, it is usually equally practicable to describe *a* as a ‘filtered’ version of *b*, as it is to describe *b* as a ‘thickened’ version of *a*; or, if two harmonies

<sup>159</sup> See Section 2.2.6 above



*a* and *b* differ only by the substitution of one pitch, it is not always possible to determine which is the 'correct' pitch, and which the substitution. Expressed in general terms, these problems amount to an uncertainty as to which events are to be considered *a priori* and which *a posteriori* contributions to the musical argument; and in such circumstances, analysis finds itself forced to concede ultimate defeat to an ineluctable ambiguity.

This reversibility of interpretation in certain instances is only one of what, with due acknowledgements to William Empson, might be described as at least Three Types of Ambiguity that arise from Takemitsu's compositional praxes in this area. A second analytical problem arises out of the fact that, as a result of the variant forms of successive repetitions, and the difficulty of establishing definitively which constitutes a 'prime' version of the musical text, any attempt to discover a consistent 'series-like' turnover of pitches between one event and the next usually becomes effectively meaningless. Furthermore, Takemitsu's practice of substituting completely different harmonies under the same 'melody' suggests that he might occasionally handle these two aspects of the texture each according to its own independent rules; while on the other hand, his revoicing of harmonies can have the result of altering the melodic line, but retaining the essential pitch collections intact – implying that, on other occasions, harmony and melody are considered as a unity. Both on account of the textual discrepancies between subsequent rehearsals of material, therefore, and of the difficulty in determining in which direction any underlying succession of pitches is being pursued as the music proceeds from one event to the next, the attempt to arrive at processes of pitch organisation governing the integration of musical events on a larger scale is once again beset by ambiguities in the musical material.

A third type of ambiguity arises when a given event may be regarded as deriving from more than one original source, depending on the type of transformation process to which it is deemed to have been subjected. Instances of such ambiguous or polysemous events are to be found in the example below from *Green*, Ex. 25. The numerals above the stave here refer back to the harmonies of the opening thematic statement of the work, numbering them successively from 1 to 14; plus and minus signs indicate transpositions by a given number of semitones, while the



letter 'R' indicates a revoicing and 'A' an alteration of one of the other types described above. Thus the first chord, marked 3–7, is equivalent to the third chord of the original thematic statement transposed down a perfect fifth, the second chord (1R) equals a revoicing of the first chord of the whole work, and so on. With the exception of this first harmony, the fragment essentially consists of two statements of the characteristic five-chord figure with which the work begins. The first of these begins faithfully enough, with a revoicing (1R) and alteration (2A) of the first and second chords of the whole piece, but then continues with an arbitrary transposition of the remaining harmonies, excepting the fourth, a semitone higher (3+1...5+1 A). As the annotations attempt to indicate, two of these chords now become ambiguous as a result; on the one hand, their thematic context suggests that they should be considered as variants of chords 2 and 3 of the work's opening, on the other, the actual pitches they contain identify them as literal equivalents of chords 12 and 14 of the same. The second thematic statement, in the following bar, presents similar ambiguities, as well as supplying an instance of Takemitsu's independent organisation of melodic and harmonic materials. The melodic line (1...5) is exactly equivalent to the 'pentatonic' upper line of the first five chords at the opening of the work; however, the underlying harmonies derive from another statement of the same idea from later in the piece, where it appears in a form in which it is also heard in *November Steps*<sup>160</sup>. Yet a couple of these harmonies refer simultaneously to the latter variant, and to harmonies from the opening of the piece as well – the third chord (3–3 R) being a revoiced transposition of its equivalent from the opening, the fifth chord offering another version of chord 12 at its original pitch. From an analytical point of view, there are no necessary grounds for preferring either of the two interpretations of each of these chords to the other; or, indeed, acknowledging the presence of the First Type of Ambiguity in this passage, for classifying any form which has parallels elsewhere as definitively derivative or generative of those other forms.<sup>161</sup>

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<sup>160</sup> See below, Section 7.2

<sup>161</sup> Miyuki Shiraiki interprets certain remarks of Takemitsu's regarding his 1994 orchestral work *Spirit Garden*, which refer to 'an assembly of identical objects whose quality appears to vary depending on the angle from which one views them', as indicative of a similar kind of ambiguous use of materials to that seen in the above example: 'This would seem to suggest', she claims, 'that each of the "objects" or elements from which the work is composed plays a part in several related tone rows or at a nodal point in chord formations.' (CD liner notes for Denon COCO 78944, p. 6)

Melos:  
1 2 3 4 5

Harmony:  
1R { 2A 3+1... 5+1A  
12 14

3-7 3 3-3R 12

Ex. 25: *Green*, fig. 6, bb. 1-2 (lower strings only)

## 2.3 Retrograde and palindromic writing

In certain of Takemitsu's scores from around the latter half of the 'fifties onwards, one begins to come across occasional evidence of experimentation with 'classical' dodecaphonic serial technique. The adoption of this technique will be

dealt with at greater length later<sup>162</sup>; for the moment, it will suffice to draw attention only to that aspect of this development which had repercussions for Takemitsu's formal thinking. Typically for the composer, he exploited the devices of retrogression and (to a lesser extent) inversion associated with serialism to extend the range of devices by means of which the wholesale repetition of materials could be varied and indeed, in this instance, 'disguised' in some way. In the second movement of *Pause Ininterrompue*, for instance, the pitches from bar 14 up to the high E $\sharp$  in bar 18 appear in reverse order in bars 38 to 41; while, in addition, the sequence of three chords in bar 24 is heard backwards and transposed in bar 34, and this re-ordered version itself re-presented in another transposition in bar 48. Similarly, the three-chord pattern of bar 25 (itself comprising three transpositions of the chord first heard in bar 8) is heard in transposed retrograde in bars 32 - 33 – all of these reworkings, of course, operating alongside more orthodox kinds of repetition to create the kind of typical pattern of interlocking repeats shown in Fig. 4.

While in the above instances the retrogression is applied mainly to the pitch-content, allowing other musical parameters to be freely treated, there are other cases, such as those in the first movement of *Masque*, in which the retrograde is applied not only to the pitch succession but also the durational values of the original (albeit with slight modifications to both), and even to such timbral features as the first flute's 'quasi-fluttertonguing' in bar 8, faithfully reproduced at the equivalent point in the repetition *al rovescio* (bar 13). Such passages form a corollary to the 'block' repetitions in other works, the use of retrogression here furnishing Takemitsu with simply another means of avoiding literal repeats of his material. Furthermore, this particular instance (bb. 11-17 of *Masque I*) provides an example of retrograde *inversion* as well as transposition of its model (bb. 4-10), this new ordering then being heard again in a further transposition in bb. 25-31. As in the example quoted in Fig. 4, these *canzicrans* repeats interact with a more straightforward transposition to form an interlocking pattern as shown in Fig. 5.

Although Takemitsu did not persist with the strict application of serial technique, the capacity to reverse musical succession and, in particular, to produce eye-catching 'palindromic' mirror-images which this technique first suggested appears to have become something of an obsession with the composer in certain

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<sup>162</sup> See below, Section 3.4

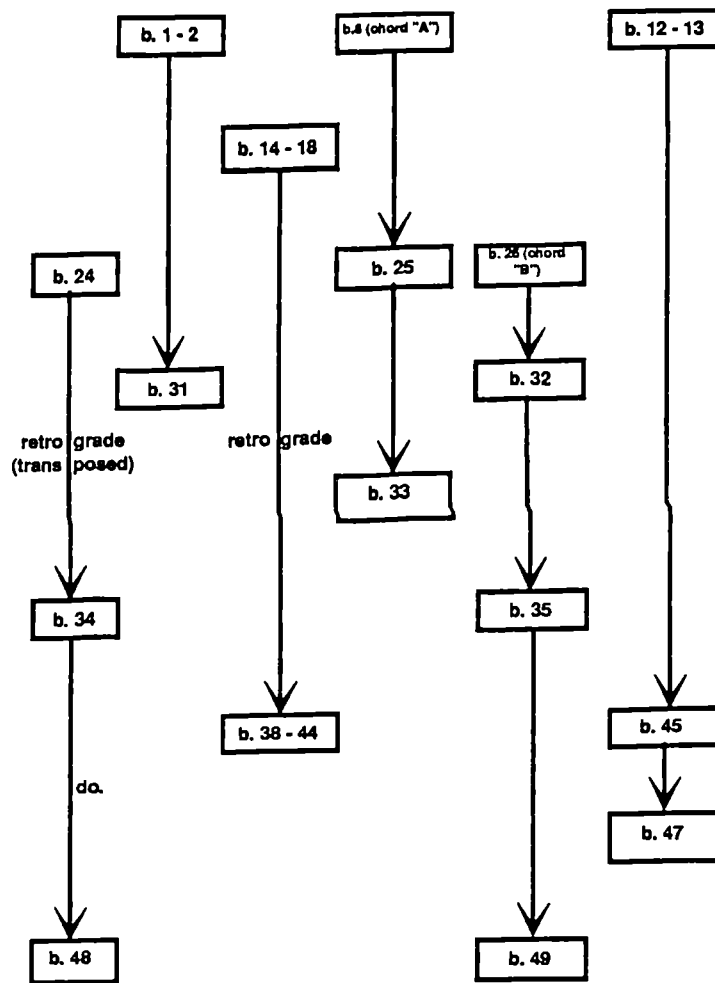


Fig. 4: Repetitions in *Pause Ininterrompue*, II

works of the 'sixties and 'seventies. Of *Arc* (1963-66), which contains a number of repetitions in retrograde, the composer himself has written that 'the work is in two sections and the direction walked in the first section is reversed in the second'<sup>163</sup>, and other works of the period such as *Le son calligraphie 3* (1962), *Asterism* (1967), *Valeria* and *Stanza I* (both 1969) and *Quatrain* (1975) all make considerable use of literal retrogrades. Perhaps the most extreme manifestation of this obsession is to be found in the composer's 1962 work for soprano and orchestra, *Coral Island*. Here one finds, on the one hand, local 'palindromic' structures such as that

<sup>163</sup> Takemitsu, transl. Kakudo and Glasow, op. cit., p. 120. The 'walking' metaphor refers to Takemitsu's conception of the soloist taking a stroll through a Japanese garden, represented by the orchestra

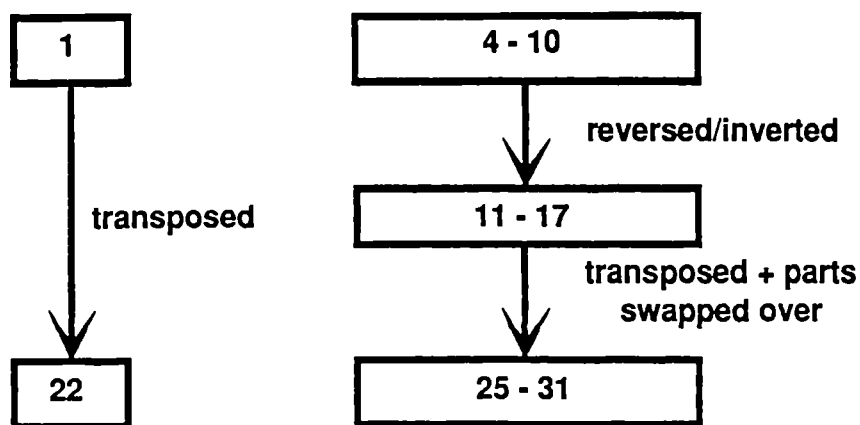


Fig. 5: Repetitions in *Masque I*

illustrated in Ex. 26, where the second clarinet part is a retrograde of the first a semitone higher; and, at the same time, the global repetition of passages in retrograde as part of an overall formal scheme which, in this instance, is itself almost symmetrical about a central axis – the whole work becoming, in effect, loosely ‘palindromic’, or at least ‘arch-like’ (Fig. 6).

a.) - "Coral Island", cl. 1, p. 5, bb. 2 - 3



b.) - Ibid., cl. 2, bb. 1 - 2



Ex. 26: Local retrograde relationship in *Coral Island*

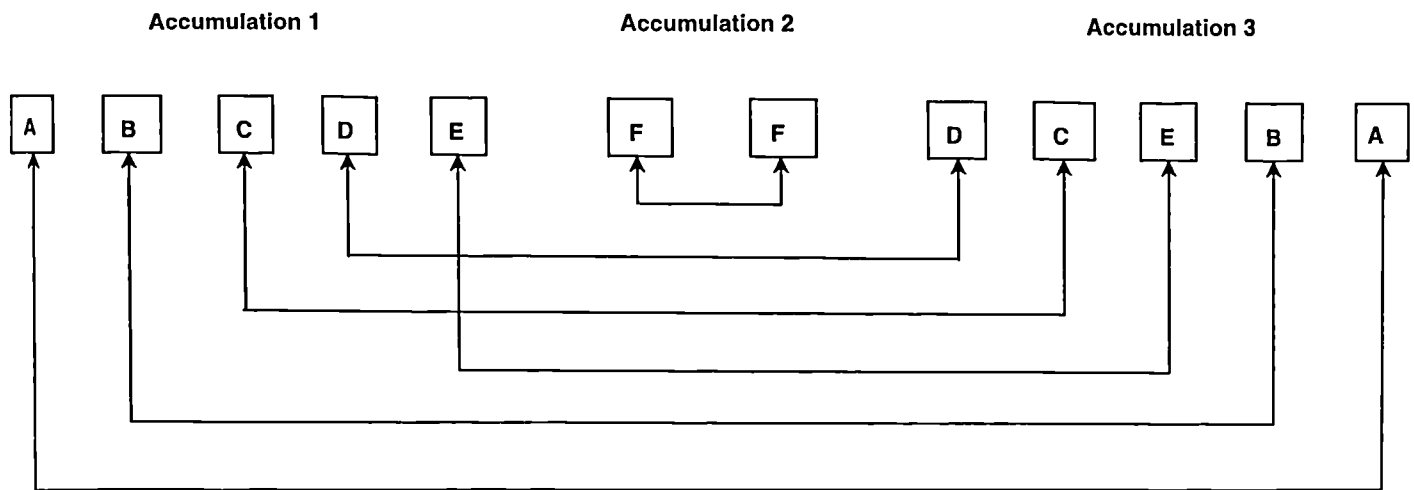


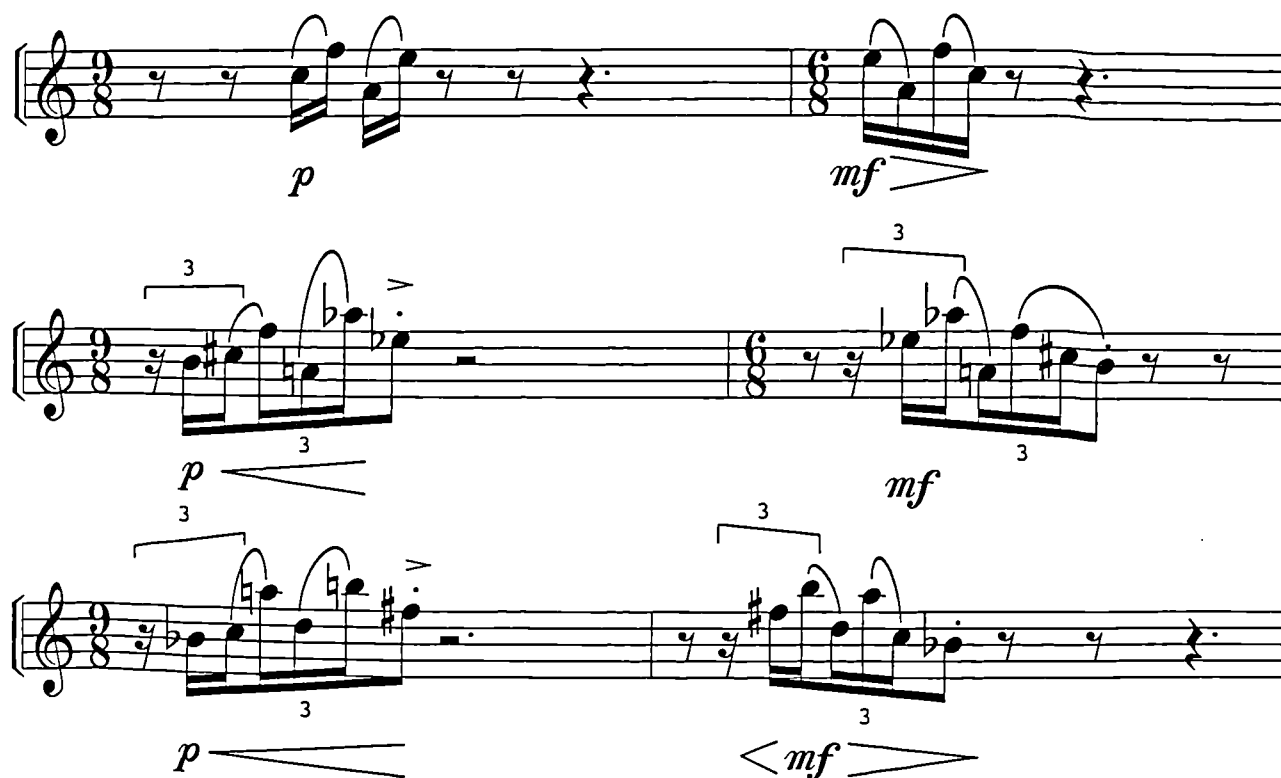
Fig. 6: Global retrograde relationships in *Coral Island*

In passing, it should perhaps be noted that a less strict application of this same kind of ‘arch-like’ symmetry – in other words, one in which the correspondences are not, as here, literally palindromic – is to be found in certain other multi-movement works of Takemitsu. For example, the complete version of *In an Autumn Garden* for *gagaku* ensemble (1979) comprises the loosely symmetrical sequence of movements ‘Strophe - Echo I - Melisma - In an Autumn Garden - Echo II - Antistrophe’; while movements bearing the same titles as the outermost pair of the latter work frame two inner movements (‘Genesis’ and ‘Traces’) in a somewhat similar fashion in *Gémeaux* (1971-86.) Similarly symmetrical forms are also found on an internal level in the case of single-movement works; Jeong Woo Jin goes to the extent of asserting that the arch-form he perceives in *Rain Tree* is ‘a general formal structure in Takemitsu’s music’<sup>164</sup> – a statement that may be less of a sweeping generalization than at first appears, if one takes into account the fact that the ABA form to which reference has already been made is, of course, one kind of arch structure.

In later years, as Takemitsu moved away from the ‘formalistic’ preoccupations of his middle period, he appears to have lost much of his former interest in the literal reversal of musical materials. Nevertheless, even in such a late work as the four-movement *All in Twilight* for guitar (1988), one finds a ‘free retrograde’ repeat of material in the third movement, taking its place in a network of other

<sup>164</sup> Op. cit., p. 15

repetitions in the manner of Takemitsu's very earliest experiments in this sphere; while the closing pages of *Vers, l'Arc-en-Ciel, Palma* for guitar, oboe d'amore and orchestra (1984) include the cheekily palindromic interjections for piccolo quoted below, perhaps in honour of the 'rainbow' of the work's title (Ex. 27).<sup>165</sup>

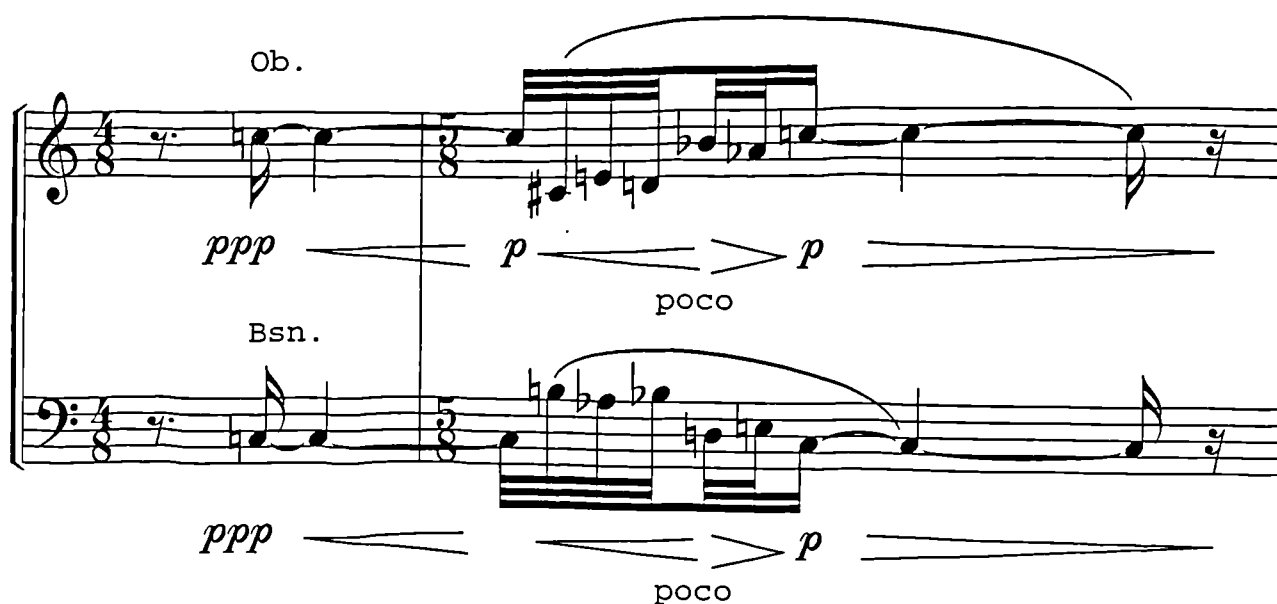


Ex. 27: *Vers, l'Arc-en-ciel, Palma*, letter P (picc.)

Before quitting this topic, it may be appropriate to describe here Takemitsu's occasional use of similar 'mirror-image' formations whose axis of symmetry lies on the vertical rather than the horizontal plane; in other words, material which is simultaneously 'reflected' by its own intervallic inversion. A good example of such a 'vertical palindrome' is to be found in the 1987 work for flute and orchestra, *I*

<sup>165</sup> Takemitsu's fondness for this kind of construction was clearly obsessive enough to spill over, in at least one instance, into the purely verbal medium of his theoretical writings as well: the title of one of the sub-sections of the text translated into English as 'Mirrors', 'The Unpolished Mirror', is a piece of palindromic wordplay in the original Japanese (*Migakanu kagami*). See: Takemitsu (transl. Adachi and Reynolds), op. cit., p. 59 and footnote, p. 77





Ex. 28: *I Hear the Water Dreaming*, letter C, bb. 3-4

*Hear the Water Dreaming*. Here the 'mirror-relationship' of the two parts to one another is clearly visible in the notation (Ex. 28).

A similar, though less obvious, example of vertical symmetry is afforded by the following extract from *Orion and Pleiades*. Here the various *ostinato* patterns of the lower voice are imitated by the upper in canonic inversion; as the pitches of each pattern are fixed while it persists, the result in terms of 'implied harmony' is a series of three collections of pitches, *each symmetrically arranged about a vertical axis* (Ex. 29).

## 2.4 Other structural types

During discussion of the overall formal patterns that emerged from Takemitsu's use of repetition<sup>166</sup>, it was observed that some of the works in question might at the same time appear to project other large-scale schemes of formal organisation. In the case of *Requiem for Strings*, the distribution of repeated materials appeared to reinforce this second, 'ternary' organisation; while, in the case of *November Steps*, the formal partition into eleven 'steps' described by the composer and the patterns

<sup>166</sup> Above, section 2.1

Cl., hrp., celesta

Fl., hrp. *p*

*p*

(+ob.)

Ex. 29: *Orion and Pleiades III* ('Pleiades'), letter B

of repetition in the score appeared to constitute independent and self-sufficient levels of structural organisation. The following section is devoted to describing some of the other types of overall formal organisation of which Takemitsu occasionally makes use – whether these occur in conjunction with repetitions of material or not, and whether such repetitions act in tandem with the formal organisation or otherwise.

One such formal category is that into which *November Steps* itself falls, of articulated forms built from an accumulation of short segments. As the composer's

own remarks have corroborated, the formal patterning of this work is implicit in the title Takemitsu chose for it: 'November' in Japanese is *jūichigatsu*, the eleventh month, while one of the possible equivalents of the English word 'step' in Japanese is *dan*, the technical term used in traditional Japanese music for the sections in *nō* plays and, later, also in *shamisen* and *koto* music:

'The term *dan* is used...for the scenes of *nō* plays; it is also a musical term and means the sections in ballads.'<sup>167</sup>

Works comprising several *dan* are referred to as *danmono* ('matters in steps'), and one of the most celebrated works in the traditional repertoire for *koto* is in fact called *Rokudan*, or 'six steps'. There is thus a famous precedent for the 'eleven steps without any special melodic scheme'<sup>168</sup> to which Takemitsu's title refers:

'It was performed in November, and to me that project represented a new step: thus, I titled the work "November Steps." In Japanese music, *danmono* are the equivalent of Western variations, and the word *dan* means "step." My "November Steps" are a set of eleven variations.'<sup>169</sup>

It is not exactly certain how these 'eleven variations' of the composer's description actually map onto the events shown in the score. While Takemitsu himself suggestively provides eleven rehearsal numbers in the course of the work, the only commentator known to the author who has actually attempted a definitive eleven-fold segmentation of the structure – Kuniharu Akiyama – deviates slightly from the obvious interpretation implied by these markings; although accepting a correspondence between 'steps' ('*dan*') 3 to 11 and the appropriate rehearsal numbers in the score, he labels the twenty-four-bar introduction '*dan*' 1, and consequently has to locate the beginning of the second '*dan*' after the introduction, at precisely the point where Takemitsu's rehearsal number 1 appears.<sup>170</sup> Similarly, the description

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<sup>167</sup> Harich-Schneider, op. cit., p. 419

<sup>168</sup> Takemitsu, transl. Kakudo and Glasow, op. cit., p. 88

<sup>169</sup> Ibid., p. 63. As this quotation also suggests, however, the word "step" in Takemitsu's English title has a dual meaning, encompassing not only the specialised musical sense corresponding to *dan*, but also the more prosaic, everyday meaning of the word, for which the Japanese equivalent is *kaitei*: the Japanese title of Takemitsu's 1971 essay on the work, '*Jūichigatsu no kaitei*' (Takemitsu (1971), pp. 185-189) makes this explicit.

<sup>170</sup> Akiyama, Kuniharu, *Saishin Meikyoku Kaisetsu Zenshū* (Tōkyō: Ongaku no Tomo Sha, 1980), Vol. 10, pp. 407-411

of the soloists' cadenza from this work as the 'tenth step' on a recent CD recording<sup>171</sup> again suggests a different segmentation from that implied by the rehearsal figures, since the tenth of these actually appears in the orchestral passage four bars before the cadenza begins. Perhaps therefore, the wisest course would be, like Ohtake, to speak only of 'eleven ambiguously separated sections'<sup>172</sup>; yet nevertheless, the sectional nature of the work remains indisputable enough, and similar sectional forms are to be described in other works of Takemitsu's. The composer's own description of *A Flock Descends into the Pentagonal Garden*, for instance, is strongly reminiscent of his remarks about the 'eleven steps without any special melodic scheme' of his earlier work, although on this occasion the magic number would appear to be thirteen:

'Each section of this piece has a special story: maybe, thirteen small sections, thirteen variations – not variations in the Western sense, rather, like a scroll painting. So when I composed this piece I made up a story, a picture, like a scroll painting.'<sup>173</sup>

The 'maybe' with which Takemitsu qualifies his description recalls the 'ambiguity' that Ohtake discerns in the segmentation of *November Steps*, and indeed it is as difficult to arrive at a definitive partitioning of the later work as it is of the earlier. Perhaps in fact one should not be too surprised at such an outcome, if the work is indeed patterned after the continuously unfolding sequence of 'boundless' images in a Japanese scroll painting as the composer claims. Nevertheless, the essential point that these two works are both cast in some sort of episodic form remains valid, even if the boundaries between such episodes are sometimes rather hazy.

It will be observed also that, in the case of *A Flock Descends*, Takemitsu specifically speaks of 'variations', and draws especial attention to the 'oboe melody' which 'takes on a special rôle as the "flock"'<sup>174</sup> in this work. Such remarks recall the description he gives, in the preface to the score, of his 1982 work for chamber orchestra, *Rain Coming*:

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<sup>171</sup> Polydor POCG-3357

<sup>172</sup> Ohtake, op. cit., p. 58

<sup>173</sup> Takemitsu, Cronin and Tann, op. cit., p. 208

<sup>174</sup> Ibid.

‘*Rain Coming* is a variation of colours on the simple figure played mainly on the alto flute which appears at the beginning of the piece.’

Here the less hesitant application of the term ‘variation’ proves justified by the content of the score, for the characteristic alto flute figure of the opening – or at least, the augmented triad arpeggio of its *incipit* – does indeed appear at strategic points throughout the work. However, in the end these are once again ‘not variations in the Western sense’; and in fact this score, one of the few to carry such an explicit ‘classical’ formal tag, is only to a slighter degree more ‘organised’ in the Occidental sense than *A Flock Descends*. One notes, nevertheless, a similarity between both of the above works in the manner in which a recurring solo melody – given to the alto flute in *Rain Coming*, and to the oboe in *A Flock Descends* – assumes the rôle of delineating formal sections; and it is a similarity shared with other works in the Takemitsu canon. In *Vers, l’Arc-en-Ciel, Palma*, for example, it is the function of the oboe d’amore to introduce the sections of a form whose ‘strophic’ character is perhaps referred to in the ‘Vers’ of the title; while Takemitsu’s description of the function of the alto flute in *Rain Coming* could, *mutatis mutandis*, equally well be applied to the solo flute theme that recurs over and over again throughout *I Hear the Water Dreaming*. Such a use of melodic material as formal marker comes close to the concept of *ritornello*, of course, and indeed one finds certain pieces where the use of that term would seem apt enough. The opening figure of the third (‘Pleiades’) movement of *Orion and Pleiades*, for example, recurs at strategic moments; while the *ostinato* gesture at the beginning of the 1988 orchestral work *Twill by Twilight* occurs no less than nine times in the course of that piece.

Other categories of overall organisation that can be divined in Takemitsu’s output include the ‘arch-like’ structures referred to in the previous section, and in particular, such ‘ternary’ forms as those that have already been observed in both *November Steps* and *Rain Tree Sketch*, or that found in the second movement of *Rocking Mirror Daybreak*, which, unusually, is a genuine *da capo* complete with repeat marks. One commentator has also suggested that Takemitsu made use on at least one occasion of the *jo-ha-kyū* form<sup>175</sup> of traditional Japanese music in

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<sup>175</sup> ‘Jo means introduction, Ha exposition and Kyū conclusion. The tempo of each is slow, moderate and fast, respectively. The form is not based on the idea of symmetry A-B-A, but the idea of

*Arc*, which like its putative model embodies ‘birth, growth and decline’<sup>176</sup>; and there is also the somewhat unusual case of *Asterism*, which ‘is structured to have one long crescendo’<sup>177</sup>, and whose dramatic, one-way self-propulsion towards total orchestral annihilation is supported by the manner in which material tends to be repeated in a kind of ‘zig-zag’ pattern, deriving from ever more recent originals and abandoning earlier materials irrevocably, as can be seen graphically illustrated in Fig. 7 below.

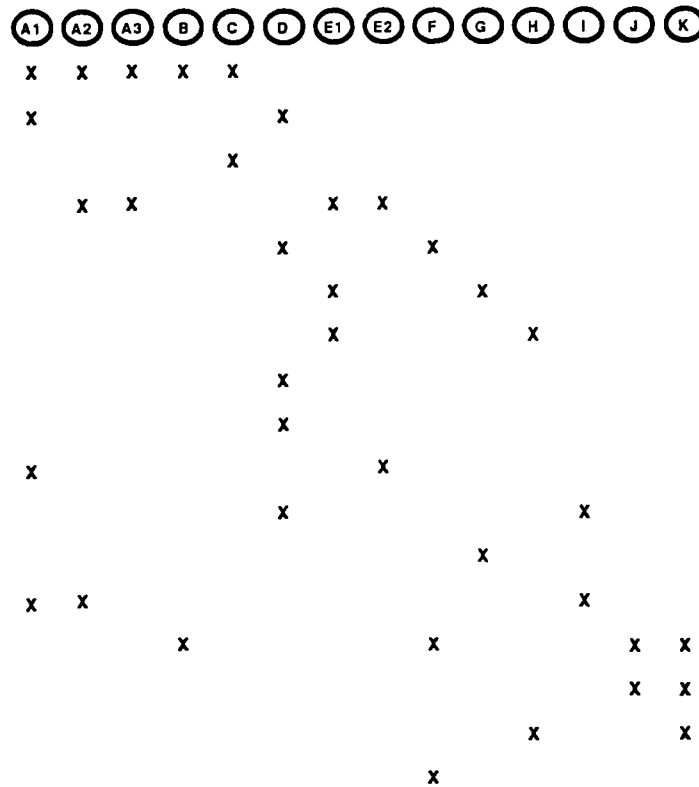


Fig. 7: *Pattern of repeated materials in Asterism*

However, in conclusion it should be stressed that it is unwise to lay too much emphasis on these palpable evidences of ‘architectonic’ thinking in certain of Take-

A-B-C.’ Kishibe, Shigeo: ‘The Traditional Music of Japan’ (Tōkyō: Ongaku no Tomo Sha, 1984), p. 29

<sup>176</sup> Feliciano, Francisco F.: ‘Four Asian Contemporary Composers’ (Quezon City (Philippines): New Day, 1983), p. 72

<sup>177</sup> Ohtake, op. cit., p. 94

mitsu's works – not only because the scores exhibiting such features are definitely in the minority, but also because the idea of imposed form anterior to the compositional process, into which the ideas are poured as into a mould, is somewhat antithetic to Takemitsu's assertion that 'his musical form is the direct and natural result which sounds themselves impose, and nothing can define beforehand the point of departure'<sup>178</sup> – or, as the composer himself more forcefully expresses it, 'I gather sounds around me and mobilize them with the least force possible. The worst is to move them around like driving an automobile.'<sup>179</sup>

## 2.5 Use of pauses, fermatas, etc

Whatever types of formal patterning might be used by Takemitsu in individual works, it is clear that a consistent practice of the composer is to make clear sectional sub-divisions by means of decaying sound-events, general pauses, and other forms of punctuation involving silence. This has been remarked upon by several Takemitsu scholars; Gibson, for instance, offers a segmentation of the second movement of *Masque* into three sections and a 'sort of coda' by means of pauses and *fermatas* in his analysis of that work<sup>180</sup>, while Jeong Woo Jin notes that in *Rain Spell* 'several phrases are often framed [sic] by rests, and *fermatas* are employed to separate major sections.'<sup>181</sup> Elsewhere in Takemitsu's output, other devices may be used to articulate the sectional form – in *A Way A Lone* (1981) for string quartet, for instance, in addition to the usual small-scale partitioning by means of rests, commas, etc., larger sections are delineated on the one hand by the use of double bar lines, and on the other by frequent changes of tempo; double bars are also used to indicate formal divisions in three out of four movements of *Rocking Mirror Daybreak*, in addition to which sections enclosed in repeat marks naturally acquire a certain structural independence by their privileged status. In *Rain Tree* for three percussionists (1981), a clear episodic division is achieved by means of changes in instrumentation, musical material, texture and even the stage lighting; while (perhaps most interestingly of all), the ends of sections in the ensemble piece *Waves* (1976) are marked largely by gestures, especially of a *crescendo-diminuendo*

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<sup>178</sup> Feliciano, op. cit., p. 73

<sup>179</sup> Takemitsu (1971), p. 206. Quoted in Ohtake, op. cit., p. 27

<sup>180</sup> Gibson, op. cit., p. 139

<sup>181</sup> Jin, Jeong Woo, op. cit., p. 34.

nature, for bass drum, which thus acquires something of the punctuating function that scholars of gamelan music (and, indeed, of *gagaku*) refer to as 'colotomic'.

Although it is the professed aim of this enquiry to deal with Takemitsu's music from a technical standpoint, leaving aesthetic questions to one side, the use of silence is so deeply evocative of 'oriental' sensibility for the Western reader that it seems impossible to turn aside from this subject without offering at least some thoughts on the matter. Takemitsu's handling of silence has indeed drawn a great deal of attention from writers on the composer; in particular, much has been written on its relationship to the traditional Japanese aesthetic concept of *ma*. Timothy Koozin, for example, offers the following gloss on this term:

'In the Japanese language, space and time are conceived as a single entity called *ma*. In art works, *ma* is an expressive force which fills the void between objects separated in time or space. The architect, Arta Isozaki describes *ma* as an aesthetic quality which occurs at the edge where two separate worlds meet.'<sup>182</sup>

This last phrase perhaps affords some clue to the understanding of the concept; Koozin goes on to relate it to the *perdendosi* class of events in Takemitsu's piano writing, noting that, since these lack a clear point of termination, 'one is more likely to hear the silence arising toward the end of such a figure as a direct outgrowth of the previous sound event. In this sense, the sound event draws silence into the piece as an active rather than a passive element...The moment of waiting for sound to become silence is imbued with *ma*.'<sup>183</sup> A similar point is made by Ting-Lien Wu in his commentary on Takemitsu's *Bryce* of 1976; referring to a gong stroke followed by a *fermata* which implies that 'all resonance returns to silence', he notes that 'this moment of stillness...(like the white space in a Chinese or Japanese *sumie* painting) is a kind of extension of previous sound images'<sup>184</sup>, while speaking of another *fermata* a few pages later he observes that such silences are at the same time 'full of vitality and expectation' as 'the driving impulse resulting from the

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<sup>182</sup> Koozin (1990), p. 36

<sup>183</sup> Ibid.

<sup>184</sup> Wu, Ting-Lien: 'An Analysis of Tōru Takemitsu's "Bryce" (1976), with an Emphasis on the Rôle of Articulation' (PhD thesis, UCLA, 1987), p. 25



formal process...is expected to resume.<sup>185</sup> This partly echoes Koozin's view above, at least to the extent that the listener's rôle in the silent passages is one that is active and expectant, rather than relaxed and passive.

While the wider philosophical ramifications of Takemitsu's thinking in this sphere are beyond the scope of this enquiry, it has been deemed necessary to convey at least the bare essentials of his philosophy of silence, if only in order to demonstrate that it is emphatically *Eastern* in conception, and not to be confused with the use of rests as a structural element in composition which one finds in certain Western composers of the twentieth-century *avant-garde*: Takemitsu's 'concept of rests differs greatly from that of Webern and Boulez who had used sound as counterpoint to silence in ways that are *calculated*.'<sup>186</sup> *Such a rigid schematization of the relationship between sounds and silence would constitute the kind of imposition of artificial structural processes which, to Takemitsu, is anathema:*

'Within our Western musical notation the silences (rests) tend to be placed with statistical considerations. But that method ignores the basic utterance of music.'<sup>187</sup>

## 2.6 Conclusions

In this, and in equivalent concluding sections over the course of Part II of this thesis, an attempt will be made to suggest likely models for the techniques described in the preceding sections; and, in particular, to note whether the source of influence is Eastern or Western in origin, with the ultimate view of establishing to what degree Takemitsu has been successful in integrating elements from these two traditions.

In the case of the first item discussed above, however, Takemitsu's consistent use of interlocking cycles of repetition to create sometimes complex large-scale networks, it is actually very difficult to think of any possible sources of influence on the composer. One certainly comes across passages of *verbatim* repetition in Messiaen, but Takemitsu's elevation of the device to the status of principal means

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<sup>185</sup> Ibid., p. 32

<sup>186</sup> Feliciano, op.cit., p. 71

<sup>187</sup> Takemitsu, transl. Kakudo and Glasow, op. cit., p. 5

of formal arrangement in so many of his works seems without parallel in the work of other composers. In fact, this insistence on repetition would appear to be one of the most original and characteristic traits of the composer. If influences are to be found, they are perhaps to be sought outside the Western musical repertoire, outside any musical repertoire at all, in fact, in the sphere of the Japanese art of the formal garden:

‘Sometimes my music follows the design of a particular existing garden. At times it may follow the design of an imaginary garden I have sketched...I have described my selection of sounds: the modes and their variants, and the effects with shades, for example. But it is the garden that gives the ideas form.’<sup>188</sup>

Takemitsu made explicit comparisons between the structure of some of his works and that of a formal Japanese garden on a number of occasions; for example, according to Dana Wilson, the composer specifically linked the structure of his *Garden Rain* (1974) for brass to that of a Japanese rock garden<sup>189</sup>, while in the CD notes<sup>190</sup> for his *Fantasma/Cantos* for clarinet and orchestra (1991) he tells Richard Stolzman that the work was influenced by viewing a Japanese ‘tour’ garden. The most detailed comparison between the specific musical details of any of his works and the attributes of a formal garden that the composer was pleased to give, however, was with reference to his large scale work for piano and orchestra *Arc* (1963-76), in which the soloist is compared to an individual ‘taking a stroll’ through the orchestral garden:

‘In *Arc for piano and orchestra*, written in 1963 for Yūji Takahashi as soloist, the stroller is Mr Takahashi. He has a unique way of walking that resembles limping, which is important in this piece.’<sup>191</sup>

Takemitsu’s extensive commentary on this work includes a pair of diagrams showing the features of an imaginary garden and their translations into orchestral gestures, which – together with a similar pair of diagrams in his notes on *A Flock*

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<sup>188</sup> Ibid., p. 119

<sup>189</sup> In a lecture given at the Eastman School of Music in 1974; see Wilson, op. cit., p. 6

<sup>190</sup> RCA BVCC676

<sup>191</sup> Takemitsu, transl. Kakudo and Glasow, op. cit., p. 120. Ohtake comments at length on Takemitsu’s remarks on *Arc* (op. cit., pp. 89-94)

*Descends* – have been much reproduced in writings on the composer<sup>192</sup>; yet, despite such apparent candour, as one commentator has expressed it, ‘to make clear what sort of rôle the spatial layout of Japanese gardens plays in this series of compositions is a perplexing task.’<sup>193</sup> There is certainly a temptation to see a parallel between the distribution of stones, trees, plants and so forth about a garden and the typical Takemitsu pattern of ‘blocks’ of fragmented materials, often treated as single units for purposes of repetition, as if the ‘stroller’ were re-viewing them on his return through the garden; such an inference is apparently made by Masafumi Ogawa, for example, who notes that ‘In *Kaze no Uma*<sup>194</sup>, many fragmented sound units are juxtaposed. This exemplifies what Takemitsu calls “garden form”.’<sup>195</sup> But examination of Takemitsu’s diagrams themselves shows that what he is illustrating here is a parallelism between the ‘time-cycles’ of the various components of a garden – rocks, grass, trees and sand – and the speeds of activity of various elements in the orchestral texture; in other words, a vertical phenomenon (the kind of ‘pan-focal’ instrumental stratification to which the composer refers elsewhere<sup>196</sup>), rather than a horizontal one (the actual extension of the musical work in time of which ‘form’ is descriptive.) Thus, while it may seem reasonable enough to extend the metaphorical application of Takemitsu’s ‘garden’ analogy in order to encompass the composer’s overall formal process, as Ogawa does, it must be borne in mind that there is nevertheless a discrepancy between such an assumption and the composer’s own description of manner in which he applies the ‘garden’ analogy to musical ends, at least in his notes on *Arc*. This is a discrepancy which has also been remarked upon by Akimichi Takeda, although he sees it as implying *rather* a change of attitude on the composer’s part over the course of the years; while in the earlier works ‘landscape gardening’ was taken as equivalent to ‘pitch organisation’, he believes, in works such as *Fantasma/Cantos* from more recent times the latter

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<sup>192</sup> Cf., for example: Takemitsu, transl. Adachi and Reynolds, op. cit., p. 66; Taniyama, op. cit., p. 80; Funayama, ‘Takemitsu Tōru Nōto 11’, p. 75; Shinji and Takemitsu, op. cit., p. 176; Ohtake, op. cit., p. 90

<sup>193</sup> Funayama, ‘Takemitsu Tōru Kenkyū Nōto 11’, p. 74

<sup>194</sup> I.e. ‘Wind Horse’ for mixed chorus (1961-66)

<sup>195</sup> Ogawa, Masafumi: ‘Tōru Takemitsu’s compositional techniques and his identity as Japanese in western art music: an analysis of *Kaze no Uma* (“Wind Horse.”)’ *Research Bulletin of the Faculty of Education, Oita University*, 13/(1) (1991), p. 126

<sup>196</sup> Discussed below, Section 3.1.4

concept has been completely replaced by the notion of a 'site for walking'.<sup>197</sup>

A few instances were noted above in which the subordinate details of this type of form appeared to add up to a higher-level structure of a kind with which a Western listener could feel familiar, and which could even be classified on occasion, as in the 'ternary' forms of *Requiem* and *Rain Tree Sketch*, or the 'variation'-like episodes of *Rain Coming*. These occasional oblique references to 'Western' models, however, only throw into starker relief the absence of such patternings in the greater majority of Takemitsu scores. In these cases, the various elements of the score do not sum up to yield some overall formal pattern at a higher level: rather, the sum of elements simply *is* the formal pattern: a whole layer of intermediary conceptualisation is absent. This is a point to which further attention will be drawn in the conclusion of this thesis<sup>198</sup>; for the moment, it is perhaps sufficient to point out that it once again suggests a fundamentally 'Oriental' structural æsthetic. As Koozin has pointed out, 'The beauty of the moment and of the individual elements is not subservient to a larger formal design in many works of traditional Japanese art.'<sup>199</sup>

Takemitsu's method of treating certain repeated passages as units which are then operated upon wholesale – transposed, reversed, spliced together, etc. – is clearly an exploitation of the 'non-directed' quality of twentieth-century atonalism (or, at least, of non-functional free chromaticism) to provide a context in which events can be subjected to such abrupt, unprepared transformation without the damage which would otherwise occur to an ongoing 'tonal' narrative. This is especially true, of course, of retrograde schemes; and Takemitsu's indebtedness to the principal twentieth-century exponents of atonality in the use of this device is made explicit by its origins in his brief experimentation with serial technique in the late 'fifties and early 'sixties.<sup>200</sup> But, while Takemitsu's 'palindromic' constructions obviously recall their equivalents in Webern (and Alban Berg in his more hermetic moods), it should not be forgotten that this device also figured in Messiaen's musical vocabulary. In *Vocalise*, for instance, the second movement of Messiaen's

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<sup>197</sup> Takeda, Akimichi: 'Manazashi no Ongaku: Saikin no Takemitsu- Sakuhin o Meguru Shōyō', *On-gaku Geijutsu* 52/12 (Dec. 1994), p. 19

<sup>198</sup> See below, Section 9.3

<sup>199</sup> Koozin (1988), p. 42

<sup>200</sup> See below, Section 3.4

*Quatuor pour la Fin du Temps*, a central passage is framed symmetrically by episodes offering parallel sequences of related events, including a piano passage which reappears in retrograde (Ex. 30). Takemitsu would certainly have known Messiaen's famous work even before the composer himself analysed it for him in 1975, since it is recorded that it appeared on the programmes of *Jikken Kōbō* concerts in the early nineteen-fifties.<sup>201</sup>

8<sup>va</sup>-----,

Ex. 30: Retrograde relationship of passages from Messiaen, *Quatuor pour la Fin du Temps*, II

<sup>201</sup> Cf. Kasaba, Eiko, op. cit., p. 95

Takemitsu's consistent policy of deviating from literal repetitions of material by means of slight textual modifications has one or two near-parallels in the practice of Western composers: Ligeti, for instance, is known to introduce what he terms *kleine Fehler* or 'little mistakes' into his musical mechanisms, and Birtwistle's reliance on random numbers as a source of 'imperfections' in the musical surface of his work has also been well documented.<sup>202</sup> However, one cannot be entirely sure whether Takemitsu's knowledge of either of the above was sufficiently intimate to grant the possibility of an influence here. A more significant aspect of such practices, perhaps, is the quality of *ambiguity* which, it has been seen, Takemitsu contrives to impart to his musical materials by means of their use: a quality which would appear rather to reflect Japanese predilections in the matter, at least if Takemitsu's employment of this device in his own 'highly symbolic, illusive and sometimes even contradictory' writings is anything to go by:

'This fact reflects the Japanese culture in which both artistic and practical communications are ambiguous; one can conceive manifold implications from a single statement. This vagueness is considered æsthetic.'<sup>203</sup>

In particular, the possibility of plural interpretations for the derivations of certain passages, and the lack of *conclusive distinctions between a priori and a posteriori* musical events in Takemitsu's scores would appear to point to a radically different conception of musical form from that of traditional occidental models. The schemes followed by the latter, in which successive stages in the development of a musical idea usually appear in temporal succession, can be seen as analogous to the development of a logical argument from (a) clearly stated initial premiss(es), or, indeed, to the typical Western concepts of linear time and causal connection between successive events. By contrast Takemitsu, creating ambiguities about the origins of his materials, and uncertainties as to whether the order of their appearance corresponds to the process by which they are derived from one another, subverts any such notion of logical development, substituting for it the notion of a static 'garden' of revisited, but ever-changing musical 'objects' – leaving such Western conceptions of causality, and perhaps even of temporal succession itself, far behind.

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<sup>202</sup> Cf., for example, Hall, Michael: 'Harrison Birtwistle' (London: Robson, 1984), p. 14

<sup>203</sup> Ohtake, *op. cit.*, p. xviii

## Chapter III

### Pitch materials

This, the second chapter of the investigation into Takemitsu's technical methods that forms the second part of this thesis, is devoted to an examination of the various aspects of the composer's handling of pitch materials: his harmonic language, contrapuntal methods, thematic style and so forth. Although it will readily be apparent that the materials of this chapter comprise by far the longest and most substantial technical discussion in the whole text, this should not be taken to indicate that Takemitsu's manipulative skills in this area constitute a prime focus of his compositional thinking, as is the case with a considerable number of Western composers of this century. Instead, this emphasis if anything only betrays the perceptual bias and analytical training of the author himself, as one schooled in the compositional thinking of that self-same occidental tradition. As such, it runs the danger of giving a false impression of the importance attached to constructional methods based on the control of pitch materials in Takemitsu's thought; furthermore, as possibly the most extreme expression in these pages of the author's attempt to apply the precision tools of Western analytic method to a compositional style with – as has already been observed – quite different priorities to those of much contemporary Western music, such an explication of the composer's musical thought is inevitably doomed to remain – in both senses of the term – very partial.

However, while it is certainly salutary to bear such qualifications in mind during the course of the ensuing discussion, for the moment it is probably preferable to will a certain suspension of disbelief for the course of the next few pages, in order to discover what truths it might be possible to fathom by examination of the various aspects of Takemitsu's handling of pitch materials – inappropriate though such a procedure may in the final analysis be.

## 3.1 Harmony

The acutely refined harmonic sensitivity that Takemitsu displays is undoubtedly one of his most characteristic traits, and one of the most appealing for the general listener, possessing as it often does more than a little of that seductive voluptuousness associated with the French forbears Takemitsu so admired. To be sure, during his ‘second period’ especially, Takemitsu’s harmonic language tended to acquire much more of the ‘abrasiveness’ associated with the Western *avant-garde* of those years, including as it did densely chromatic ‘cluster’ formations and even microtonal writing, to which due notice will be given below. At the outer extremes of his career, however (and, to a lesser extent, even in the middle as well), one finds that Takemitsu’s harmonic language, though still freely chromatic, is more frequently referential to tonal or modal systems – the result, in the earliest period (with the exception of the use of octatonic materials), most probably of vestigial remnants of an earlier, modal style now lost, and, in the latest period, of the conscious adoption of a *more mellifluous harmonic idiom*, as the composer moved ever closer to his ‘sea of tonality.’ The first task of this chapter on Takemitsu’s pitch materials, therefore, will be an attempt to codify some of the most frequently recurring devices of Takemitsu’s harmonic language – beginning with one of its most characteristic features, and one clearly of major significance in imparting to it its distinctively ‘tonal’ flavour: the use of both vertical and horizontal materials clearly deriving from classifiable modal or tonal scalar types.

### 3.1.1 Scalar types

Takemitsu once remarked that ‘recent Western music used the equal-tempered scale, but I am seriously interested in the idea of mode’<sup>204</sup>. This ‘serious interest’ is readily apparent throughout the whole of the composer’s output:

‘One characteristic feature of Takemitsu’s music, technically speaking, is his unique way of using modality. This is something which has not changed from his very earliest period up to the present day.’<sup>205</sup>

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<sup>204</sup> Takemitsu, transl. Kakudo and Glasow, p. 117

<sup>205</sup> Akiyama, Kuniharu: *Nihon no Sakkyokukatachi* (Japanese Composers) (Tōkyō: Ongaku no Tomo Sha, 1978-79), p. 258



The reference here to the composer's 'earliest period' is indeed confirmed by certain biographical details already mentioned in passing, namely, Takemitsu's brief flirtation with traditional Japanese scalar materials, and the 'serial pentatonic' pieces that derived from his experiments with these during his early years as a composer.<sup>206</sup> It is possible that Takemitsu's brief period of formal study with Kiyose may also have been influential in this respect, for the composer has apparently stated that his teacher's music was 'based on a pentatonic scale derived from Japanese folk tunes and that his own music during this period was "pentatonic, but not straight pentatonic" '<sup>207</sup> – a remark which Koozin glosses with the observation that 'the idea of a scale-based compositional idiom sets an important precedent for Takemitsu's later use of octatonic and whole-tone collections in the piano works.'<sup>208</sup> While Koozin's basic assertion here, that the foundations of scale-derived harmonic thinking were laid under the influence of 'neo-nationalism' in the composer's apprenticeship years, is surely correct, it is possible to discern this early influence expressing itself in later works under many more guises than merely the insistence on 'modes I and II' that is such a superficially recognisable feature of the composer's mature style. The sub-sections below attempt to redress the balance by drawing attention to some of the other scalar forms Takemitsu consistently exploited – beginning, in spite of Takemitsu's above remarks, with what is, for the Western listener at least, the most 'straight pentatonic' of them all.

### 'Classical' pentatonic

'In music the number five makes us think of the Orient and Africa. To explain it simply, it is the scale of the black keys of the piano.'<sup>209</sup>

While Takemitsu occasionally employs other five-note scales, to which due attention is given in the succeeding section, as the above quotation suggests, the specific form of pentatonic collection most favoured by him is that to which the generic term 'pentatonic' is commonly loosely applied in the west – the 'black note'

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<sup>206</sup> See above, Section 1.2

<sup>207</sup> Koozin (1988), p. 20, quoting from an interview (1964) with the composer in Lieberman, Frederic: 'Contemporary Japanese Composition: its relationship to concepts of traditional oriental musics' (MA Thesis, University of Hawaii, 1965)

<sup>208</sup> Koozin, loc. cit.

<sup>209</sup> Takemitsu, *Yume to Kazu*, p. 14. Translation by Taniyama, Sawako, op. cit., p. 87

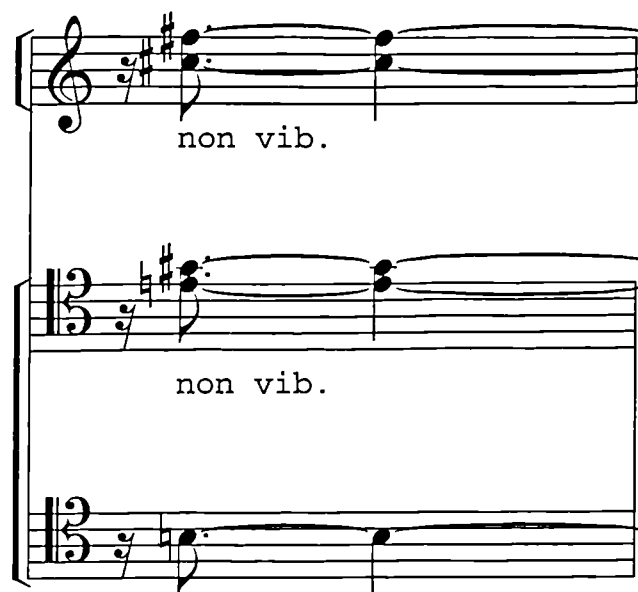
collection [0,2,4,7,9], here referred to as ‘classical pentatonic’ in order to distinguish it from other five-note forms. Takemitsu employs this collection both melodically and harmonically; for example, whatever exactly the composer might have meant by the title of his *Dorian Horizon*, there can be little doubt that from the second bar of the passage quoted in Ex. 31 until the end of the example the harmonic horizon is decidedly more limited than this term might imply, and that perhaps *Pentatonic Horizontal* might be more appropriate, given that all the pitches here fall within the ambit of that scale.

Ex. 31: *The Dorian Horizon*, bb. 80-83

As has already been observed, the melodic line of the opening of *Green*<sup>210</sup>

<sup>210</sup> Quoted in section 2.2.2, Ex. 7a

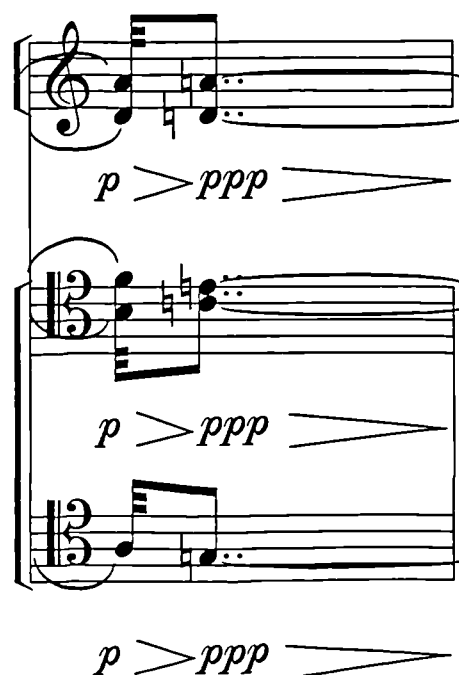
projects a complete pentatonic collection, although here this uppermost line has been harmonised with richly chromatic, unrelated chords in a manner that recalls Messiaen's practice. A more characteristic use of this mode by the composer, however, is in the form of a verticalisation of all five constituent pitches simultaneously. One example of such a 'panpentatonic' vertical has been encountered already, in the interpolated chord at fig. 11, b. 2 of *Green*<sup>211</sup>; and it is interesting to note that, while this type of sonority seems fitting enough within the context of that genial, avowedly 'vernal' composition, two examples of this same harmony are also to be found within the much more abrasive and chromatic harmonic setting of *Green*'s companion piece *November Steps*, without the least trace of incongruity (Exx. 32a & b).



Ex. 32a: *November Steps*, b. 32 (brass)

In Takemitsu's later years the use of such 'verticalised panpentonic' forms as final harmonies became almost a trademark of the composer, evoking in the listener associations with the Berg Violin Concerto and even *Das Lied von der Erde*. This tendency is perhaps already adumbrated in such works as *Sacrifice* (1962) and *Garden Rain* (1974), whose final pitch collections sound like incomplete subsets

<sup>211</sup> Section 2.2.6., Ex. 15b



Ex. 32b: Ibid., b. 61

of full pentatonic harmony – G#, F, Eb, Bb in the case of the former work, for instance, implying a pentatonic C#/Db major. The work which really brought the pentatonic collection into the foreground of musical events for the first time, however – both as a constant referential device, and as signifier of final closure – is *A Flock Descends into the Pentagonal Garden*. As Takemitsu has himself described,<sup>212</sup> the pitch materials on which this work is based were derived by constructing a sort of ‘magic square’ from the five notes represented by the black keys of the piano, and it is therefore small wonder that pentatonic materials feature as a prominent reference sonority in the finished score, and that the piece ends with the first of Takemitsu’s many ‘panpentatonic’ valedictions – further examples of which were to be afforded by such other late-period scores as *Toward the Sea* (1980) (first movement), *Dreamtime* (1981), *Vers, l’Arc-en-ciel*, *Palma* (1984) and *A String Around Autumn* (1989). Interestingly perhaps, *Green*, whose simplified musical language afforded a surprisingly prophetic glimpse of Takemitsu’s future musical direction as early as 1967, also ends with a panpentatonic chord – but at

<sup>212</sup> In his ‘Dream and Number’ (*Yume to kazu*), pp. 14-16, from which the quotation at the beginning of this section is taken

this stage the cadential effect is unbalanced by the voicing: although the sustained harmony is a verticalisation of the pentatonic collection A-B-C $\sharp$ -E-F $\sharp$ , the placing of the B in the bass, and the D $\sharp$  of the horn's melody, contrive to impart to it a 'B dominant seventh' feel which, instead of bringing the work to a close, unexpectedly reveals a magical, evanescent glimpse of a possible E major future.

### Other pentatonic scales

Mention has already been made<sup>213</sup> of Takemitsu's early explorations into other forms of five-note scale: specifically, the *ryō*, *ritsu* and *in* scales of traditional Japanese music. There are few vestiges of these experiments in the composer's mature concert pieces; one of the most surprising occurs in *Litany in Memory of Michael Vyner*, a 1990 work which, as has already been stated, is a recomposition of the composer's 'début' composition, *Futatsu no Rento*. The example quoted below (Ex. 33) represents a rare instance of a substantial passage composed entirely within the ambit of one of the traditional Japanese scalar forms – in this instance, a transposition of what Shigeo Kishibe describes as the ascending form of the *in* scale of *koto* and *shamisen* music.<sup>214</sup> Comparison of the *Litany* score with the recording that is our sole surviving documentation of the original on which it was based<sup>215</sup> reveals, unexpectedly, that the passage in question is a new feature of the 1990 recomposition, and not a vestige of Takemitsu's teenage experimentations with Japanese modalism persisting into his first acknowledged work. However, the original work is nevertheless not devoid of modal references of this kind, even if they are not presented as obviously as in the passage quoted below; the opening theme, which is identical in both pieces (though the accompaniments differ)<sup>216</sup> projects all five pitches of the same modal collection as that of Ex. 33, although here the supporting harmonies contain extraneous notes. Perhaps it is to this aspect of the earlier composition's first movement materials that Kunharu Akiyama is referring when he speaks of its 'plaintively sombre pentatonic main theme.'<sup>217</sup>

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<sup>213</sup> In Section 1.2 above

<sup>214</sup> Kishibe, op. cit., pp. 19-20

<sup>215</sup> *Futatsu no Rento*, played by Kazuoki Fujii (piano), Fontec FOCD3202

<sup>216</sup> The opening of the later version is quoted below, Section 7.3, Ex. 187

<sup>217</sup> Akiyama, Kuniharu, 'Nihon no Sakkyokutachi', p. 255

### "In" scale ascending



### (Transposed)



Ex. 33: *Litany in Memory of Michael Vyner*, I, bb. 17-18

The use of this mode, one of the most evocatively 'Japanese'-sounding of scales for the Western listener, imparts to the quoted passage a strong hint of the atmosphere of the 'Nationalist' school of Japanese composition, and it is perhaps precisely for this reason that modal usages of this kind are almost entirely absent from Takemitsu's mature work, in conspicuous contrast to the vast number of harmonic forms drawn from other modal sources. Ex. 34 quotes one of the few other instances known to the author: the brief use of a single chord which verticalises the *in* scale in its descending form, in the 1974 work for solo guitar, *Folios*.

### Whole-tone scale

Takemitsu makes use of whole or partial statements of the [0,2,4,6,8,10] hexatonic scale both horizontally and vertically, and throughout his composing career.



Ex. 34: *Folios*, I (penultimate chord)

In the following example (Ex. 35) from the early *Pause Ininterrompue* for piano, for instance (1952), the tetrachord projected by the last four notes of the upper-most melodic line can be considered a partial whole-tone statement (the remaining pitches proper to the mode are all contained in the final harmony.)

Ex. 35: *Pause Ininterrompue*, I, b. 6

A more striking example occurs in the middle-period piece *November Steps*, where the trumpet realises a complete statement of the mode in its ascending form (Ex. 36). Similarly conjunct, 'scalar' presentations of the mode are also to be found in later works, for example at bar 57 of the 1982 piano work *Rain Tree Sketch*.



Ex. 36: *November Steps*, bb. 17-18 (trumpet 1)

Vertical statements of the complete collection are also fairly commonly encountered in Takemitsu's music; reference back to Ex. 7a will reveal that the second chord of *Green* belongs to such a category, and in the 'third period' score *A Flock Descends into the Pentagonal Garden*, the woodwind enter with a sustained pan-hexatonic harmony at the third bar of letter J which persists right up to the general pause two bars before letter K. Partial vertical statements of the collection are even commoner, especially as constituent layers of the kind of 'stratified' harmonic forms described in section 3.1.4 below. It is this kind of statement of whole-tone subsets, either as melodic feature or as sub-elements of vertical and linear structures, to which Koozin applies the term 'whole-tone referential', and which he takes as a starting point for his analyses of whole-tone elements in Takemitsu's piano works. Of course, all whole-tone subsets of five notes or less cease to be exclusively proper to the whole-tone collection, and may be parsed ambiguously as subsets of two or more scalar pitch sets – a further type of ambiguity in Takemitsu's music, to which more attention will be drawn below.<sup>218</sup> But it may be noted in passing that precisely this ambiguity enables the composer, according to Koozin, to use the same [0,2,6] trichord as a common element of both whole-tone and octatonic collections in the 1979 piano work *Les Yeux Clos*; a factor which, Koozin claims, 'plays a crucial rôle in the interpenetration of whole-tone and octatonic structures'<sup>219</sup> in this piece.

### Diatonic scales

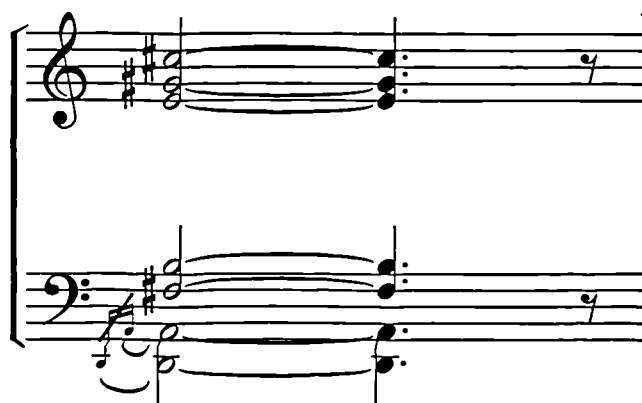
Takemitsu made an explicit acknowledgement of his use of one of the conventional heptatonic modes of Western music by giving the title of *The Dorian*

<sup>218</sup> See Section 3.1.2

<sup>219</sup> Koozin (1988), p. 188



*Horizon* to his 1966 work for string orchestra, which he described as a ‘personal, pantonal music which takes the Dorian mode as its starting point.’<sup>220</sup> While this point has been dutifully acknowledged and amplified by other commentators – such as Akiyama<sup>221</sup>, who suggests that the ‘song’ of the work ‘is extracted from a Dorian collection formed of two tetrachords’, and Funayama<sup>222</sup>, who similarly refers to the work’s derivation from ‘the Greek mode formed from two tetrachords’ – the actual manner in which the musical substance derives from the eponymous modal collection is, as usual, for the most part shrouded in mystery. Perhaps the most that one can assert with any confidence is that vertical collections clearly derivative of conventional Western modalism form a consistent and conspicuous feature of the work’s harmonic landscape. However, this was no more an isolated instance in Takemitsu’s music than was the pentatonicism of *A Flock Descends* unique to that work; similarly ‘modal’ collections – horizons ‘Lydian’, ‘Phrygian’ and so on, so to speak – are to be found throughout Takemitsu’s *œuvre*. Ex. 37, from *Litany*, gives an example of one such modal collection, in this instance a ‘pandiatonic’ harmony comprising all seven pitches of a verticalised ‘D Lydian’ scale. Since this chord occurs in the original *Futatsu no Rento* as well, it indicates a practice established by Takemitsu right at the beginning of his composing career.



Ex. 37: *Litany in Memory of Michael Vyner*, II, b. 30

<sup>220</sup> The composer’s programme note, in: *Ongaku Geijutsu*, 25/3 (March 1967). Quoted in Akiyama, op. cit., p. 258

<sup>221</sup> *Saishin Meikyoku Kaisetsu Zenshū* v. 13, p. 467

<sup>222</sup> ‘Takemitsu Tōru Kenkyū Nōto 9’, p. 64

This kind of wholesale verticalisation of an entire heptatonic mode is found occasionally throughout Takemitsu's output. Ex. 38 shows an interesting example from the much later *Rain Coming* for chamber orchestra (1982), in which a simultaneous sounding of all the pitches forming the scale of 'A major' is followed by a similar diatonic cluster using the seven notes of an 'E $\flat$  major' scale.

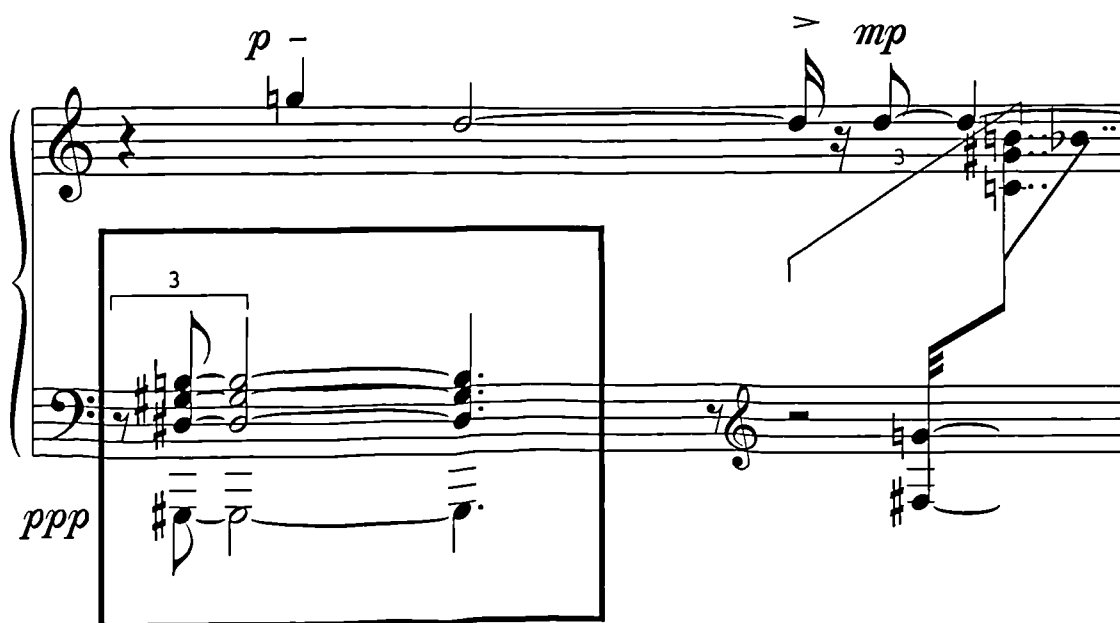
A-fl., ob., cl., bsn.

Trp., hrn., trbn.

Ex. 38: *Rain Coming*, letter L, bb. 5-6

Besides such vertical, pandiatonic statements as these there are of course numerous horizontal statements of whole or partial modal collections of this kind, as well as vertical statements of diatonic subsets which, like their whole-tone counterparts, may belong ambiguously to more than one possible modal source. The latter is true of the harmonic type in the following example (Ex. 39); but it has been felt proper to deal with this particular chord under the present heading, on account of its indissoluble historic associations with the world of 'tonality' of which the Western diatonic modes are such an intrinsic part.

Conventional major and minor triads such as this, as well as other chords



Ex. 39: *Pause Ininterrompue*, III, b. 9

belonging to ‘common practice’ tonal harmony such as dominant sevenths and ninths, appear occasionally in every period of Takemitsu’s musical output. Mention has already been made of the progression of unrelated triads to be found in the score of *Vers, l’Arc-en-ciel, Palma*<sup>223</sup>, floating above the main harmonic texture with chains of rather *Rosenkavalier*-like coruscating tintinnabulation. While, in such instances as these, the triadic occurrences are more or less divorced from their traditional ‘tonal’ functions, in the 1981 work for three percussionists, *Rain Tree*, tonality and triadic harmony converge at the end of the piece, where the ‘sea of tonality’ to which the work has been gravitating – the same D $\flat$  major that is also the ultimate goal of *Rain Coming* and *A Way A Lone* for string quartet – is embodied in a very quiet major triad in that key, *tremolando*, for two marimbas.

This may be an appropriate place to note, in parenthesis, Takemitsu’s occasionally very explicit uses of conventional ‘tonality’, sometimes complete with key signatures. Unsurprisingly, the first movement of the very early *Futatsu no Rento* (or, at least, of its 1990 reincarnation as *Litany*) is prefaced by the appropriate four flats of its ostensible ‘F minor’, although this is one of those occasions

<sup>223</sup> Quoted as Ex. 4 in Section 2.2.1 above

where the gesture is more of a nuisance than a practical help from the performer's point of view. In later years, extended passages of conventionally 'tonal' music occasionally made their reappearance, often in connection with 'folk-like' or other populist materials. In *Wind Horse* for mixed chorus (1962-66), for instance, an entire Bantu lullaby is quoted in  $A\flat$  major<sup>224</sup>, and Takemitsu seems to have taken this as a cue for composing some suitably lugubrious music of his own to afford it a context; while the Catalan melody quoted in *Vers, l'Arc-en-ciel, Palma*<sup>225</sup> is granted the appropriate two sharps of its D major tonality in the score. Although in its context the former of these two examples, at least, affords something of a flabbergasting shock to the listener, as one moves further away from the 'serious' end of the spectrum of Takemitsu's musical activities towards his more avowedly 'populist' works, such tonal excursions become more and more normative. *Bad Boy*, for instance, a short work for two guitars composed in 1993, derives its material from the composer's music for a 1961 film of that name<sup>226</sup>, and is divided into sections of quite conventional 'common practice' A minor and major; while the *a capella* songs of *Uta*, dating from various periods in the composer's working life, contain several numbers so unambiguously lightweight and tuneful that they have also been recorded in Japan and released as pop songs.<sup>227</sup> While, strictly speaking, somewhat outside the scope of this essay, such activities suggest that, even in the midst of periods of advanced experimentation in the composer's 'serious' scores, outside this enclave the 'sea of tonality' was flourishing unashamedly in the composer's more 'popular' works, and its irruption into the mainstream of Takemitsu's compositional activity in his 'third period' must be considered somewhat less of a discontinuity as a result.

### Other heptatonic scales

Of other seven-note scalar forms employed with any regularity by Takemitsu, the most common is the so-called 'acoustic' scale with sharpened fourth and flattened seventh, [0,1,3,4,6,8,10]. Horizontal use of the mode is clearly illustrated by

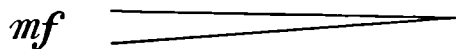
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<sup>224</sup> See below, Section 7.1, Ex. 176

<sup>225</sup> Also quoted, in Section 7.5, Ex. 195

<sup>226</sup> 'Furyō Shōnen', dir. Susumu Hani

<sup>227</sup> 'Tōru Takemitsu Pop Songs', recorded by Seri (female vocalist), Denon COCY-78624



**Ex. 40: *Asterism*, b. 8 (celesta)**

the above example from *Asterism*, where the celesta presents a descending form of the complete scale as a *glissando*-like figuration (Ex. 40).

In the same manner already observed with the other scales discussed to date, Takemitsu also builds up vertical forms from pitches falling within the ambit of this mode, occasionally containing the full seven-note collection. One such ‘panacoustic’ harmony, occurring elsewhere in *Asterism*, has already been quoted – the chord marked **B** in Ex. 12a<sup>228</sup>; further instances are provided by the examples below, from *Piano Distance* (Ex. 41), *November Steps* (Ex. 42, chord **C**) and *Rain Coming* (Ex. 43). The pitch-content of both of the last two examples is in fact identical to that of the chord in the example from *Asterism* referred to above, and a similar identity of pitch-content between the chords labelled **A** in both Ex. 12a and Ex. 42<sup>229</sup> suggests some sort of derivative relationship between these two passages, or perhaps a common origin for both of them.

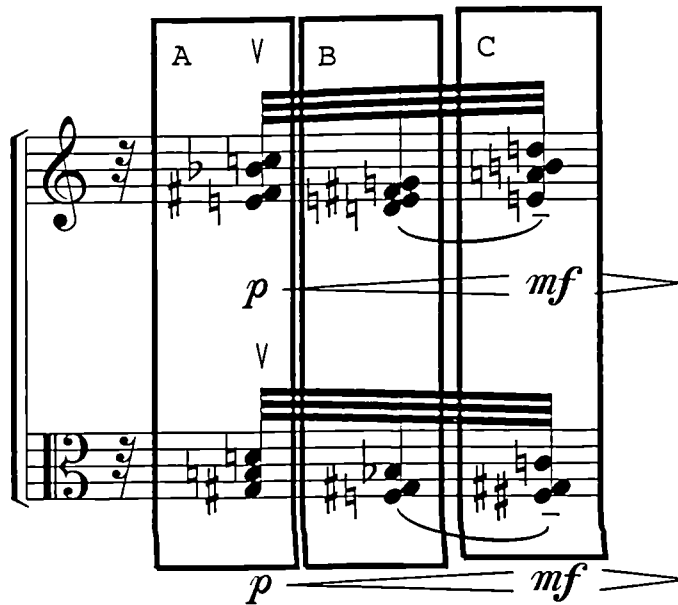
The pitch-content of the acoustic scale is, of course, identical to that of the ascending form of the so-called ‘melodic minor’ scale of traditional harmonic practice. Its companion-piece in the harmony textbooks, the rather theoretical ‘harmonic minor’ ([0,1,3,4,6,8,9]), is another of the conventionalised heptatonic scales which Takemitsu exploits for his own, often quite unconventional, ends. In the example below from *Wind Horse*, for instance, a scale which could perhaps pedagogically be parsed as ‘D $\flat$  harmonic minor’ is used to impart a rather ‘Moorish’- or ‘Spanish’-sounding modal piquancy to a passage whose tonal centre is unambiguously A $\flat$

<sup>228</sup> See above, Section 2.2.4

<sup>229</sup> In both cases, an example of the ‘whole-tone + 1’ collection discussed below in Section 3.1.2



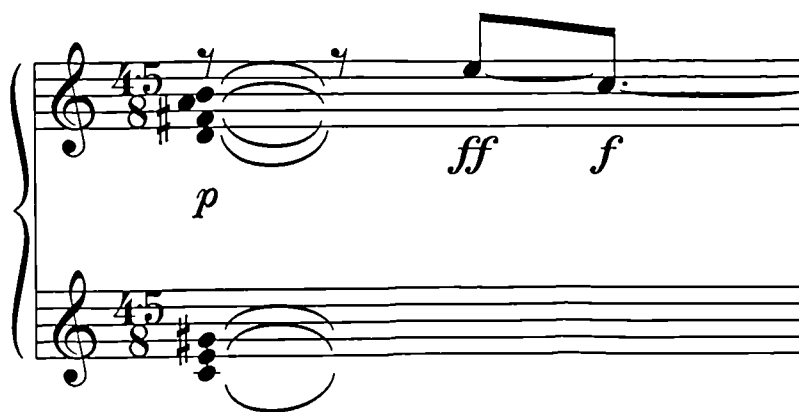
Ex. 41: *Piano Distance*, b. 41



Ex. 42: *November Steps*, b. 2, vln. + vla. (l.h.)

(Ex. 44).

Once again, such horizontal usages are complemented by instances of the pitches of the mode being used in vertical superimposition. In the example below



Ex. 43: *Rain Coming*, D/6

from *Eucalypts*, a work for flute, harp, oboe and strings written in 1971, the chord marked **A** states simultaneously all seven pitches of what a Western theorist would describe as B harmonic minor (Ex. 45).

While the intervallic inversion of the pitch-class set of which the ‘acoustic’ mode is comprised is identical with the prime form, the ‘harmonic minor’ scale can be inverted to yield a non-classifiable, ‘nonce’ form, a kind of major scale with flattened sixth, or melodic minor with sharpened fourth. Once again, Takemitsu uses this scale both melodically and harmonically; for example in *Coral Island*, the recurrent upbeat figure to the ‘chaconne-like’ harmonic ostinato at the close of the work (Ex. 46) projects the seven pitches of the mode horizontally, while in *Entre-temps* for oboe and string quartet (Ex. 47), exactly the same pitches may be found transformed into a simultaneous harmony.



Ex. 46: *Coral Island*, ‘Poem 2’, b. 30 (marimba)

Implied scale: 



Ex. 44: *Wind Horse*, IV, bb. 1-4

### Octatonic scale

Each of the modal forms discussed to date has strong historical connotations, as a consequence of which, Takemitsu tended to avoid writing extended passages lying within the ambit of a given modality, unless for a specific purpose – the quotations and ‘populist’ passages of traditional tonality, for instance, in a work such as *Wind Horse*. Instead, his use of these modes was generally confined to verticalised harmonies as part of freely chromatic progressions, or occasional evanescent passages of horizontal writing within a given modal system. With the so-called ‘octatonic mode’ ([0,1,3,4,6,7,9,10]), Messiaen’s ‘second mode of limited transposition’, however, the situation is rather different. Here, by contrast, one does find extended passages employing either a free mixture of the three available transpo-



Ex. 45: *Eucalypts*, D/2 (2nd. vln.)

Ex. 47: *Entre-temps*, b. 51

sitions of the mode, or even one transposition of the mode alone, as in the case of *Tree Line* for chamber orchestra (1988), where all of the material between the second bar of letter K and the third of M falls within the ambit of mode II<sup>3</sup>, with the exception of the harp material at L/5-6<sup>230</sup>. One also, of course, comes across copious instances of octatonic-derived materials used in promiscuous combination with other harmonic elements. This use of 'mode II' spanned the whole of Takemitsu's composing career; it is already an audible feature of the second movement of *Futatsu no Rento* (and a visible feature of that work's 1990 resurrection as *Litany*), and remained for the rest of the composer's life one of the most characteristic features of his harmonic language, as equally apparent to the casual

<sup>230</sup> The numbering of the three transpositions of the mode follows Messiaen's practice in his 'Technique de mon Langage Musical' (Paris: Leduc, 1944), p. 59 (English version)

listener as it is to informed commentators such as Koozin and Ohtake<sup>231</sup>. In some works indeed – for example *Distance de Fée* (1951) – the mode is so prevalent that it is more realistic to list the few bars in the piece where it does *not* occur than to give an account of all its appearances. Given the ubiquity of the scale throughout Takemitsu's whole output, then, the discussion which follows will be confined to a few instances that seem of especial interest, with the implicit understanding that countless others could be drawn from the legion occurrences throughout the composer's career.

The horizontal use of the mode over extended periods is perhaps seen at its most direct in the following pair of examples from the guitar work *All in Twilight* (1987), where the musical material consists entirely of conjunct scalar motion through the pitches of mode II<sup>1</sup> (with one gap in the lower voice), presented first descending and then in a kind of 'free inversion' ascending form (Ex. 48).

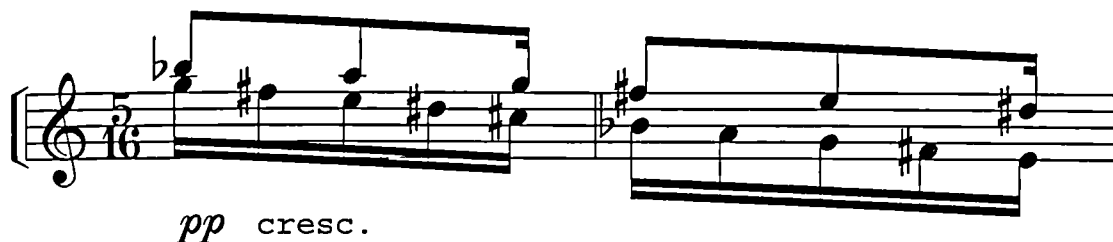
As with other scalar materials, Takemitsu also builds up vertical aggregates from the octatonic mode, including examples containing all eight pitches of a given transposition. In Ex. 49, dating from 1966, the first chord of the pair projects all the pitches of mode II<sup>1</sup>, while the second comprises seven out of the eight (Bb is lacking). 'Panoctatonic' chords such as the first of these are frequently encountered in Takemitsu's music, and evidently the composer must have been keen on their sonority, since in *Eucalypts* he hits on an ingenious method of enabling the harp, whose seven strings per octave normally limit it to the same number of discrete pitch-classes at any given moment, to attack all eight notes of the mode simultaneously by means of *scordatura*. Chord A of Ex. 50 shows the pitches of the harmony as notated in the score; but, owing to the fact that the harpist is instructed to tune the D<sup>3</sup> and G<sup>2</sup> strings of the instrument a semitone lower than usual, the actual sounding result is chord B, which once again contains all the pitches of mode II<sup>1</sup> in vertical superimposition.

The Takemitsu scholar Timothy Koozin, who has made something of a specialisation of studying the composer's use of octatonic materials, has commented on his 'tendency to move towards total chromatic saturation from an octatonic-referential

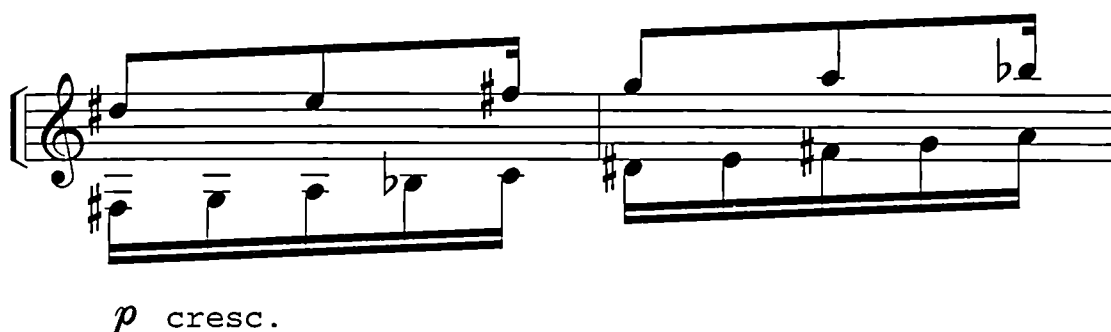
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<sup>231</sup> Cf. for example Koozin (1988 and 1991), *passim*; Ohtake (1993), p. 77

(i) III, bb. 1-2



(ii) III, bb. 5-6



Ex. 48: *All in Twilight*, scalar octatonic materials

base<sup>232</sup>, elsewhere in the same essay drawing specific attention to a passage from *For Away* for piano (1973) which, he says, 'clearly exemplifies Takemitsu's practice of building up a fully chromatic texture from an octatonic base.'<sup>233</sup> The following brief extract (Ex. 51) shows a similar harmonic process at work in *Pause Interrompue*: in the right hand, a panoctatonic collection (mode II<sup>1</sup> again), and in the left, the four pitches of the diminished seventh chord required to complete the total chromatic collection (the passage also illustrates the principle of 'chromatic complementarity' occasionally found in Takemitsu's work, as described below in Section 3.1.3).

Another feature of Takemitsu's handling of octatonic materials observed by

<sup>232</sup> Koozin (1988), p. 142

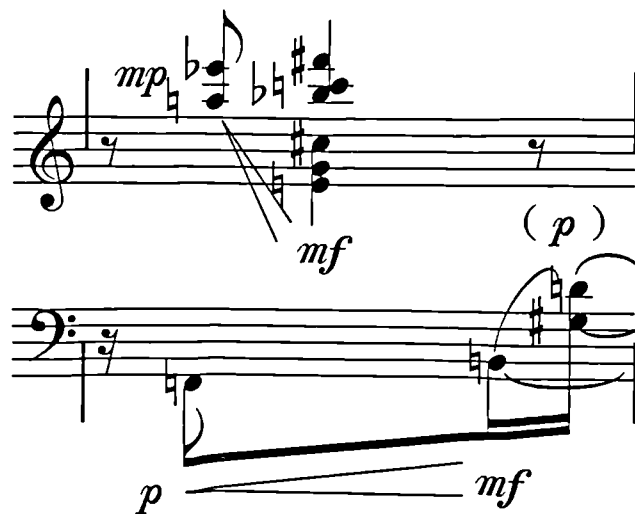
<sup>233</sup> Ibid., p. 171

Ex. 49: *The Dorian Horizon*, b. 113 ('8 harmonic pitches')

Koozin is that which occurs in such passages as bar 7 of *For Away*, where, having exposed all the pitches of an octatonic collection, 'Takemitsu veils his octatonic ref-



Ex. 50: *Eucalypts*, G/1 (final beat), harp chord (a.) as written, (b.) as sounding



Ex. 51: *Pause Ininterrompue*, II, b. 17

erence by introducing a pitch foreign to the locally predominant collection, B<sup>5</sup><sup>234</sup>; elsewhere, Koozin also notes that such ‘non-octatonic pitches tend to form semitone relations with nearby pitches in registral extremities. This is a recurring technique

<sup>234</sup> Koozin (1991), p. 126

in all Takemitsu's piano works and a hallmark of his style.'<sup>235</sup> The first of these observations of Koozin's, at least, is corroborated by the example below, the soprano's opening entry in *Coral Island* (Ex. 52). Here the first eight pitches yield a panoctatonic collection (II<sup>3</sup> mode), which is then 'contradicted' by the addition of a pitch extraneous to the prevalent mode, E<sup>4</sup>. This practice of overstepping the limits of an octatonic collection by the addition of a foreign pitches is important because Takemitsu used the same technique to lend added interest and disguise the recognisability of materials derived from other modes; it leads on to the whole subject of Takemitsu's modal harmony with added chromatic notes, which will be dealt with at length in a subsequent section<sup>236</sup>.

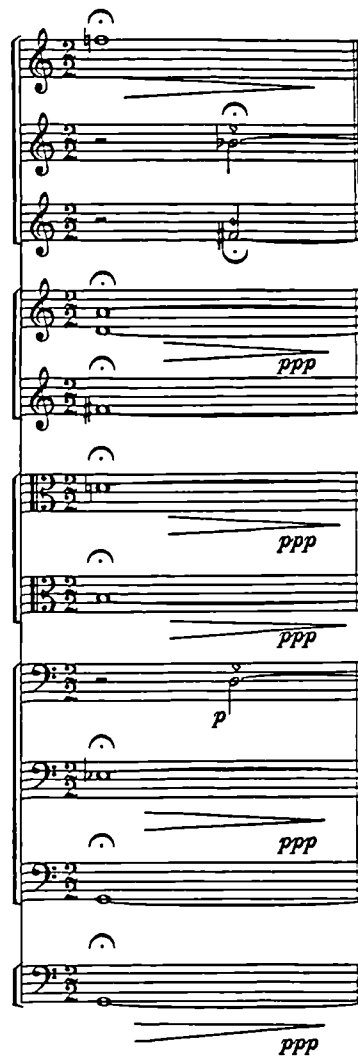
**Ku.....**                      **chi.....**

### Other ‘Messiaen’ modes

<sup>235</sup> Ibid., p. 131







Ex. 54: *Requiem for Strings*, closing chord

by the above example, where the lowest three pitches of the chord outline one of the constituent augmented triads; however, it is even more clearly illuminated by the example below from *Twill by Twilight* for orchestra (1988), in which a harmony containing all nine pitches of the mode is built up by superimposing three augmented triads, with two pitches (C $\sharp$  and E $\sharp$ ) doubled in a lower octave, and the lowest pitch (B $\flat$ ) doubled at the octave above (Ex. 55).

The above example also very neatly illustrates the relationship between the third 'mode of limited transposition' and another of Takemitsu's recurrent har-

Fl., celesta

Ob., cl., celesta

Hrn., bsn. 3

Ob., c.a., cl.

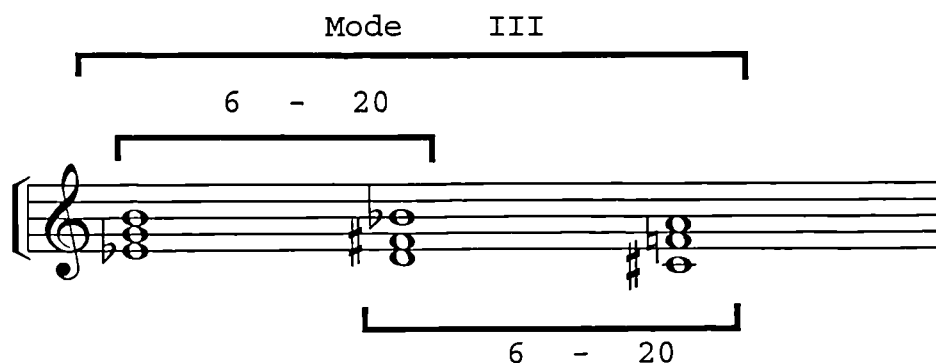
A.fl.

Hrn.

Ex. 55: *Twill by Twilight*, letter G, b. 9

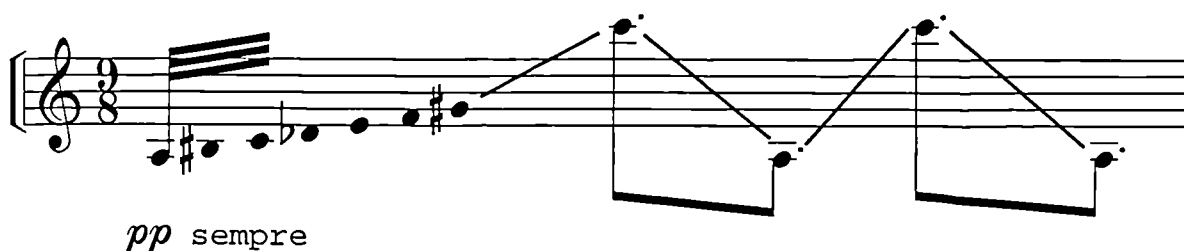
monic preferences, the pitch-collection [0,1,4,5,8,9], which for the sake of brevity will henceforth be referred to by the name Allen Forte gives it in his classified table of pitch-class sets, i.e. 6-20<sup>239</sup>. The passage first demonstrates how this 6-20 collection may be built up by the superimposition of two augmented triad sets a semitone apart, and then how, by the addition of the pitches of a third augmented triad, this six-note collection may be further expanded to contain all nine pitches of 'mode III', as shown in the following example (Ex. 56).

<sup>239</sup> See Forte, Allen: 'The Structure of Atonal Music' (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973), p. 179



Ex. 56: Relationship between 6-20 collection and third mode of limited transposition

This 6-20 collection should be perhaps be nominated as an 'eighth mode of limited transposition' to complement Messiaen's other seven, since it exists in only four transpositions.<sup>240</sup> It may be objected that it is insufficiently 'scalar' to qualify for the title of 'mode', although usages such as that shown in Ex. 57, where Takemitsu tunes the strings of the harp to the collection in order to produce a *glissando*, may perhaps offer persuasive advocacy for the opposing view.



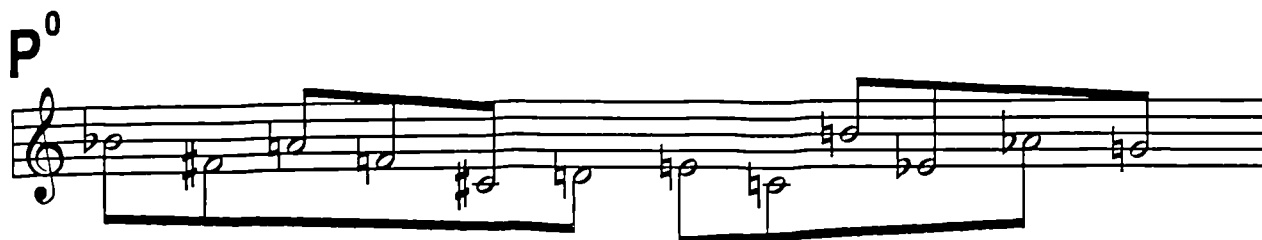
*pp* sempre

Ex. 57: *Orion and Pleiades*: 2nd. movt. ('and'), letter D (harp)

Furthermore, the chromatic complement of any 6-20 set is simply another transposition of itself, a property which the composer exploits in his violin and

<sup>240</sup> In fact, although the 6-20 set was ignored by Messiaen, its use in Bartók's music brought it to the attention of Ernő Lendvai, who lists it among other 'golden section'-derived materials as 'Model 1:3' and remarks that it forms a 'closed system' (presumably on account of its internal symmetry. Messiaen's 'mode II' also figures in Lendvai's table as 'Model 1:2'.) See: Lendvai, Ernő, *Béla Bartók: An analysis of his music*, (London: Kahn & Averill, 1971) p. 51

piano work *Hika* (1966), where two 6-20 sets are spliced together to produce a 12-note series (Ex. 58) in which the pitch-content of the second half is simply a transposition of that of the first – a ‘hexachordally combinatorial’ series, in other words, although the composer shows no inclination to exploit it in this manner, or indeed to make much use of it after the first few bars of the work in any form.<sup>241</sup>



Ex. 58: *Hika*, prime form of 12-note series

Takemitsu appears to have been particularly fond of projecting this collection as a rising arpeggio figure, often in such a manner as to reveal its constituent augmented triads, as shown clearly in Ex. 59. However, it is also possible to subdivide the 6-20 set in three different ways into a pair of triads, one major and one minor, such that the root of the former is always a major third above that of the latter. The voicing of the 6-20 harmony in Ex. 60 exploits this alternative possibility, consisting as it does of a B $\flat$  minor triad superimposed over the common chord of D major.

Of the other modal forms associated with Messiaen, the author has to date only been able to find in Takemitsu’s music instances of the use of modes six and seven, and even here one cannot always be convinced that the correspondence to Messiaen’s system was consciously intended. Mode VI ([0,1,2,4,6,7,8,10]) can perhaps best be thought of as a whole-tone scale to which have been added two extraneous pitches a tritone apart, and the appearances of the collection in Takemitsu’s music would appear to bear more relation to his intensification of hexatonic harmony by

<sup>241</sup> Takemitsu’s much later *And then I knew ’twas Wind* for flute, viola and harp (1992) is also based on two 6-20 hexachords, F- G $\sharp$ -A-C-C $\sharp$ -E and D $\sharp$ -F $\sharp$ -G-B $\flat$ - B $\flat$ -D



Ex. 59: *Dreamtime*, letter G, b. 4

Ex. 60: *A Flock Descends into the Pentagonal Garden*, letter C, b. 2

the addition of alien chromatic pitches<sup>242</sup> than to Messiaen's practice. The complete collection, at the same transposition, is projected by both of the examples

<sup>242</sup> See Section 3.1.2

below from *Eucalypts*; vertically in the case of the chord for lower strings (Ex. 61), horizontally in the brief extract from the solo flute part (Ex. 62).

6/8 (A + 2) pizz. f

A1.

6/8 (A + 2) pizz. f

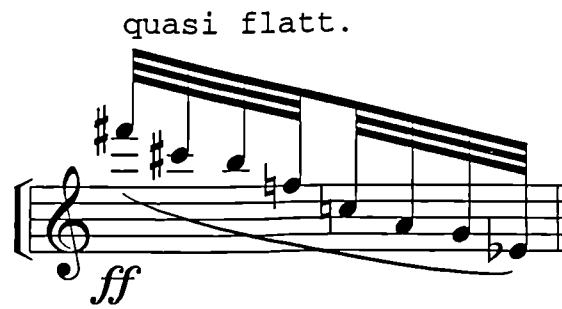
Vll.

6/8 (A + 2) pizz. f

C.B.

Ex. 61: *Eucalypts*, D/4

Mode VII ([0,1,2,3,4,6,7,8,9,10]) is the densest in Messiaen's system, comprising all the pitches of the total-chromatic with the exception of a tritone dyad. Since the number of possible ten-note sets is only six, there is a greater likelihood than heretofore that the identity of the pitch-content in the following examples to the 'mode VII' collection may simply be attributable to chance. Nevertheless, the vertical sum of the pitches in each of the two attacks in the first of these examples (Ex. 63) certainly does project a statement of the mode VII collection, the second being a whole-tone higher than the first; while the second example encompasses the



Ex. 62: Ibid., G/1

whole ten-note set horizontally, revealing also in part that it is divisible into two pentatonic scales a tritone apart, in this instance C-D-E-G-A and G $\flat$ -A $\flat$ -B $\flat$ -D $\flat$ -E $\flat$  (Ex. 64).

Fl., str., celesta, hrp.

Cl., hrn., vla., hrp.

*p* *poco* *mf*

Ex. 64: *Vers, l'Arc-en-Ciel, Palma*, bb. 1-2

### 'Nonce' and non-repeating scales

Finally, a brief mention should perhaps be made of a few examples of 'scale-like', conjunct motion in Takemitsu's music where the constituent pitches do not

**Picc.**

*legato staccato*

**Fl. 2**

*pp non pres*

**Fl. 3**

*p*

**Obs. 1**

**Obs. 2**

**E.H.**

*non vibr.*

**B<sup>b</sup> Cls.**

*p non vibr.*

**Bsns. 1**

**Bsns. 2**

**Bsns. 3**

**Harp**

*D<sup>b</sup> C<sup>b</sup> B<sup>b</sup> G<sup>b</sup>*

*sur la table*

*G<sup>b</sup> G<sup>b</sup>*

**Cel.**

**Glock.**

*p*

*p*

**Tubular bells**

*pp*

*pp*

**Ant. Cym.**

*metal stick*

*p softly*

*p*

**Gongs**

*H M*

*metal stick*

*p*

*p*

**Tan tan**

*S L*

*metal stick*

*p*

*p*

**Ex. 63:** *Green*, Fig. 6, bb. 4-5

fall within the ambit of any of the above recognised and classifiable modal systems. For example, during the ‘aleatoric’ passage on p. 14 of *Pile* (1963), the first p of *Arc Part I* for piano and orchestra, the marimba player is instructed to perform *glissandi* on a ‘nonce’ scale consisting of the nine pitches F♯-G-A-B♭-C-D-E♭-E♯-F♯, which may perhaps be thought of as a superimposition of the ascending and de-



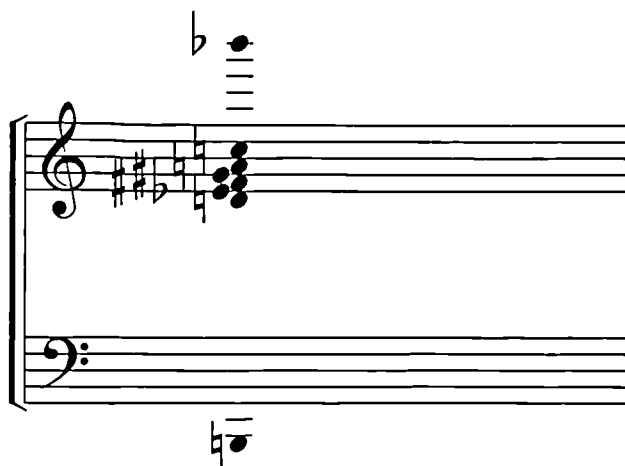
8<sup>va</sup>-----



### 3.1.2 Scalar forms with added extraneous pitches

<sup>243</sup> Alternatively, it may constitute an example of the kind of enhancement of modality by the addition of extraneous chromatic pitches that is discussed in the succeeding section

to, notes one such instance in *Dream/Window*, the harmony of bar 10 of which comprises a complete statement of what he calls ‘MTL 2’ plus a foreign A $\sharp$  in the uppermost voice.<sup>244</sup> A similar expansion of octatonic materials by inclusion of added pitches can be found in *Autumn*, a work for *biwa*, *shakuhachi* and orchestra dating from 1973; here a verticalisation of seven pitches of ‘mode II<sup>3</sup>’ is enhanced by the superimposition of B $\flat$  (Ex. 66). Both of these examples, incidentally, fulfil Timothy Koozin’s criterion that such non-octatonic pitches ‘tend to form semitone relations with nearby pitches in registral extremities’: A $\sharp$  in the uppermost voice against B $\flat$  in the bass in the first instance, B $\flat$  in the heights against a low B $\sharp$  the bass in Ex. 66.



Ex. 66: *Autumn*, p. 16, bb. 1-2, sustained harmony

Instances such as the above reflect the composer’s assertion that ‘mode ... interests me because it does not reject sounds from outside the scale’<sup>245</sup>; and since, as has been amply demonstrated above, the composer regularly employed all kinds of other modal systems in addition to the octatonic, it might reasonably be supposed that he would be inclined similarly to enrich these on occasion with extraneous pitches. His remarks on *The Dorian Horizon* certainly suggest that such a practice was indeed a conscious element of his harmonic policy in that particular work: he describes his use of the ‘tonal Dorian mode and its increase – “Dorian Augment”

<sup>244</sup> Miyoshi, op. cit., p. 132

<sup>245</sup> Takemitsu, transl. Kakudo and Glasow, op. cit., p. 119

– and decrease – “Dorian Diminish” <sup>246</sup>, which together yield a ‘mode containing all twelve pitches’<sup>247</sup> – which rather obscure explanation Yukiko Sawabe takes to mean that:

‘...underlying [this ‘echo part’] are various note collections – types of modes – which together contain the twelve chromatic pitches. Here “dodecaphony” is perceived as an aggregate of modes, and the clusters which result from this are not to be understood in terms of their sounding result in its entirety, but rather as the juxtaposition of sound elements that have been derived from the Dorian mode.’<sup>248</sup>

The process suggested above evokes echoes of the ‘tendency to move towards total chromatic saturation from an octatonic-referential base’ observed by Koozin; here the suggestion is that Takemitsu achieves a similar total chromaticism using Dorian materials as his starting point. If this interpretation is correct, then the technique bears comparison with certain other instances in Takemitsu’s scores, where materials obviously deriving from modal forms other than the octatonic scale have been intensified by the addition of extraneous chromatic pitches in a similar fashion to that shown in Ex. 66 above. The score of *Autumn* affords a number of examples of vertical forms that suggest this kind of process: harmonies whose pitch-content could be described as ‘G<sup>b</sup> major scale + E<sup>h</sup>’, ‘A major scale + B<sup>b</sup>’, ‘Acoustic scale on F + F<sup>h</sup>’ and ‘G harmonic minor + B<sup>h</sup>’, for instance. But by far the most frequently encountered of such harmonic types, and the one most important for Takemitsu, is that formed by the addition of one foreign pitch to the whole-tone scale, yielding the collection [0,1,2,4,6,8,10] – which once again, for brevity’s sake, will henceforth be referred to by the name it acquires in Allen Forte’s classification system: 7-33. Its occurrence has been remarked upon by other commentators; Dana Richard Wilson, for instance, referring specifically to *Asterism*, notes that:

‘Clearly, the most frequent relationship employed is the whole-tone scale plus one non-scale note. The non-scale note infuses a certain density and denies

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<sup>246</sup> Akiyama, *Saishin Meikyoku Kaisetsu Zenshū*, Vol.13, p. 455

<sup>247</sup> Akiyama, *Nihon no Sakkyokutachi*, p. 258

<sup>248</sup> Sawabe, Yukiko: ‘Alpträume und Träume: Der japanische Komponist Tōru Takemitsu.’ *Musik-Texte* 59 (June 1995), p. 51

the obvious aural nature of the whole-tone scale.<sup>249</sup>

Similarly Timothy Koozin, who identifies a 7-33 collection in bars 3-4 of *Les Yeux Clos* for piano (1979), observes that it ‘consists of a complete projection of wt1<sup>250</sup> with added pitch-class B’ which ‘forms a semitone dyad with the bass note Bb<sup>3,251</sup>; a type of relationship which leads him to the conclusion – similar to that arrived at when discussing the addition of foreign elements to octatonic materials – that:

‘the non-whole-tone elements present in whole-tone-referential contexts are not added merely for colouristic value. These non-whole-tone elements continually project semitone relationships with notes of special structural significance, usually bass notes.’<sup>252</sup>

It is no exaggeration to claim that this collection is probably the most ubiquitous, and certainly one of the most original and characteristic, of any of the harmonic forms employed by Takemitsu. Examples of it are to be found throughout his career – the last chord of Ex. 35, for example<sup>253</sup>, demonstrates that he had already discovered the sonority by 1952, while the chords marked with an asterisk in Ex. 8 indicate that he was still using it in 1980. One of the attractions of this chord for Takemitsu appears to have been its versatility, the manner in which revoicing the vertical can alter its character – a quality which he exploits in *Green*, for instance, where at different points in the score (see Ex. 67) the lowest parts of chords formed from the 7-33 set may produce major triads in  $\frac{6}{3}$  (iii) and  $\frac{6}{4}$  (v) position, or dominant sevenths in root (ii), first inversion (i) and second inversion (iv) position. The fact that the strings of the harp may be tuned to the pitches of a 7-33 collection, and used to produce chords and even *glissandi*, also appears to have been very much to Takemitsu’s liking, as passages such as that quoted in Ex. 68 illustrate.

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<sup>249</sup> Wilson, op. cit., p. 183

<sup>250</sup> Koozin’s own classification of the whole-tone scale beginning C, D, E...etc., the other being called wt2

<sup>251</sup> Koozin (1988), p. 201

<sup>252</sup> Ibid., p. 206

<sup>253</sup> Quoted above, Section 3.1.1

(i) 2 / 2, final      (ii) 2 / 5 4  
- 5.6      (iii) 3 / 2  
(str.)      (iv) ibid.      (v) 6 / 5.2

Ex. 67: *Green*: revoicings of 7-33 chord

P. O. 3      P. O. 5

Ex. 68: *Asterism*, b. 12 (harps)

In addition to numerous vertical presentations of the entire 7-33 collection, Takemitsu also regularly makes use of *subsets* and (to a lesser degree) *supersets* of

the parent formation. If the introduction of these terms threatens to arouse in the reader some of the scepticism which is still occasionally evoked by Allen Forte's theoretical system, it would perhaps be salutary to recall that Takemitsu himself, to a certain extent, endorses their application by virtue of his own compositional practice. One of his regular procedures for dealing with repeated materials, it will be recalled<sup>254</sup>, is to add or subtract pitches from the harmony, thus creating 'sub-' or 'superset' forms of the original<sup>255</sup>; and in fact in Ex. 2 this same process is applied to a 7-33 chord, the second of Ex. 2b, which by subtraction of B $\sharp$  yields, in Ex. 2a, a *subset* form, [0,2,3,4,6,8]. Now this latter set is one of four possible six-note forms that may be extracted from the 7-33 collection. One possible subset simply comprises the pitches of the whole-tone scale itself, whose use has been discussed above; the other three are: the set [0,2,3,4,6,8] referred to above, [0,1,2,4,6,8] and [0,1,3,5,7,9], together with their respective inverted forms. Examples of all of these are of frequent occurrence in Takemitsu's music.

For example, in addition to its regular appearances in the score of *Green*, one of which has already been referred to above, the first of these, [0,2,3,4,6,8] also crops up throughout the whole of the composer's career. Its prevalence in *Pause Ininterrompue*, for example (Ex. 69), is such that Koozin<sup>256</sup> ascribes to it a 'referential meaning' in the context of this work, although parsing it as a subset of 'mode VI'; its presence has also been detected by Masafumi Ogawa in the fourth movement of *Wind Horse*<sup>257</sup>; it is found throughout the score of the much later *Orion* (Ex. 70); and in *From Far Beyond Chrysanthemums and November Fog* it even provides the basis for the construction of a kind of twelve-note series, as described in Section 3.4 below.

Another of the subsets of the 7-33 collection, [0,1,2,4,6,8], is projected by the boxed chord in Ex. 71 and, in Ex. 72, by the vertical sum of pitches at B, preceded by a version of [0,2,3,4,6,8]i (A) over the same sustained bass dyad.

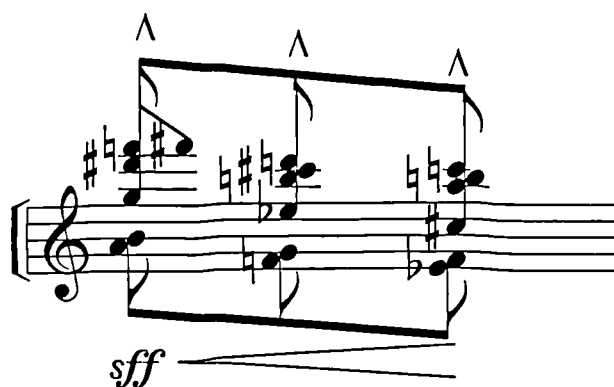
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<sup>254</sup> See Section 2.2.1

<sup>255</sup> Indeed, the very topic of this section – the addition of pitches to modal forms – is in itself an example of this kind of additive/subtractive practice

<sup>256</sup> Op. cit., p. 80

<sup>257</sup> Ogawa, op. cit., p. 122

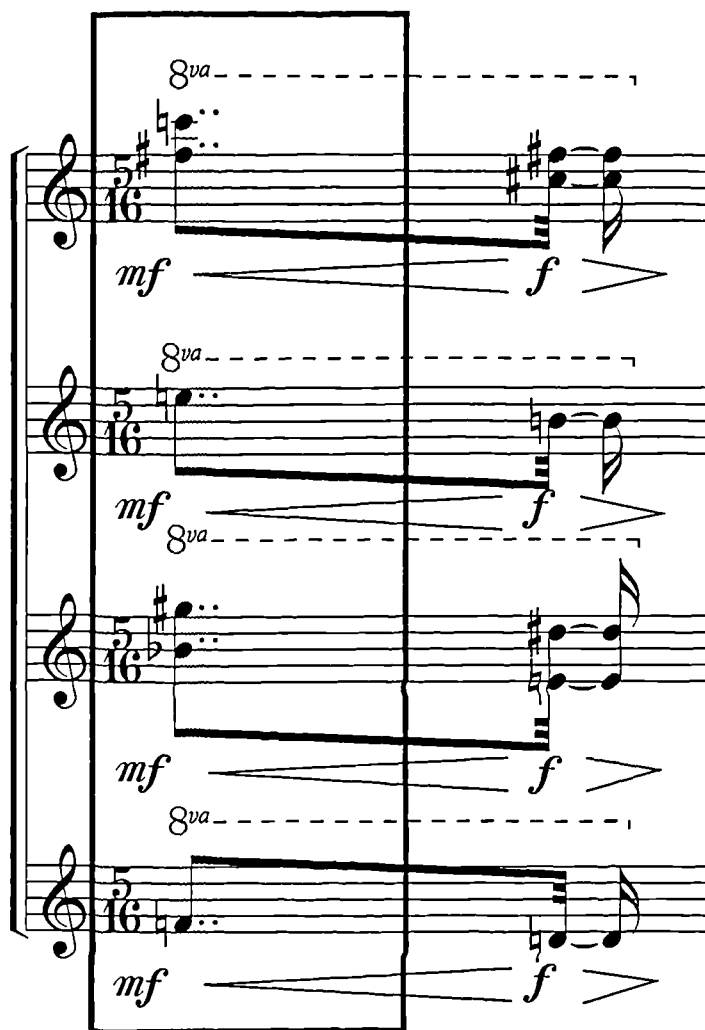


Ex. 69: *Pause Ininterrompue* II, b. 25

A musical score for two instruments, Clarinet (Cl.) and Bassoon (Bsn.), showing a complex, overlapping melodic line. The notation includes a treble clef for the Clarinet and a bass clef for the Bassoon, both with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a time signature of 3/4. The music is characterized by a series of overlapping, slanted lines that create a sense of continuous motion. A forte (ff) dynamic marking is present at the bottom of the staff.

Ex. 70: *Orion* (orchestral version), letter F, b. 7

And, lastly, the collection [0,1,3,5,7,9] is a regular contributor to the distinctive harmonic world of *November Steps*, almost the very first gesture in the whole work (Ex. 73) including two vertical statements of the pitch set, the first (A<sup>1</sup>) in

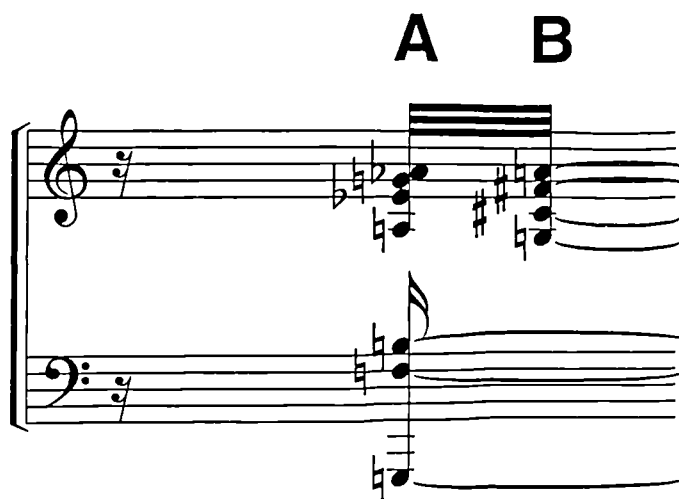


Ex. 71: *Green*, fig. 6 b. 1

inversion, the second ( $A^2$ ) in prime form. This collection, in either form, is also a subset of the 'acoustic' scale, which explains its rather 'mellower' sonority than that of the previous two examples – a property which Takemitsu exploits on two occasions in the score of *Twill by Twilight*, voicing the chord in such a fashion as to create a sensuously impressionistic, enhanced 'dominant seventh' sonority (Ex. 74).

Eight-note 'supersets' of the 7-33 collection, i.e. whole-tone scales with two foreign pitches, are also occasionally (although much less commonly) employed. The most frequently encountered is the form in which the two added pitches are them-





Ex. 72: *Quatrain*, b. 1

selves a whole-tone apart, i.e. [0,1,2,3,4,6,8,10]; Koozin remarks on the appearance of this form in b. 6-8 of *Les Yeux Clos*, correctly identifying it as ‘an intensified version of the sustained chord ending the first phrase [i.e. 7-33]’<sup>258</sup>. Ex. 75 shows two voicings of a verticalisation of the set at **A**, counterpointed by a panhexatonic chord at **B**, while the sum pitch-content of Ex. 76 provides another example of this ‘whole-tone+2’ sonority. The collection is also a superset of the acoustic scale, as Takemitsu himself demonstrates at K/5 of *I Hear the Water Dreaming*, where what begins as a panacoustic harmony is then expanded by the addition of an extra pitch to produce the ‘whole-tone+2’ type.

Of other possible eight-note supersets of the 7-33 collection, perhaps the most important is that obtained by adding two pitches a tritone apart to the whole-tone scale – yielding a collection whose pitch content is, of course, identical with that of Messiaen’s ‘sixth mode of limited transposition.’ Thus the 7-33 collection itself, together with its proper subsets, are all in turn subsets of ‘mode VI’; a fact which explains Koozin’s use of that term to describe the chord quoted in Ex. 69, and affords yet another example of the type of ambiguity implicit in Takemitsu’s harmonic system, where several collections regularly employed may be subsets of more than one of the modal or other harmonic systems that are such a consistent

<sup>258</sup> Koozin, op. cit., p. 203

$A^1$   $A^2$

$p$   $<$   $>$   $p$   $>$

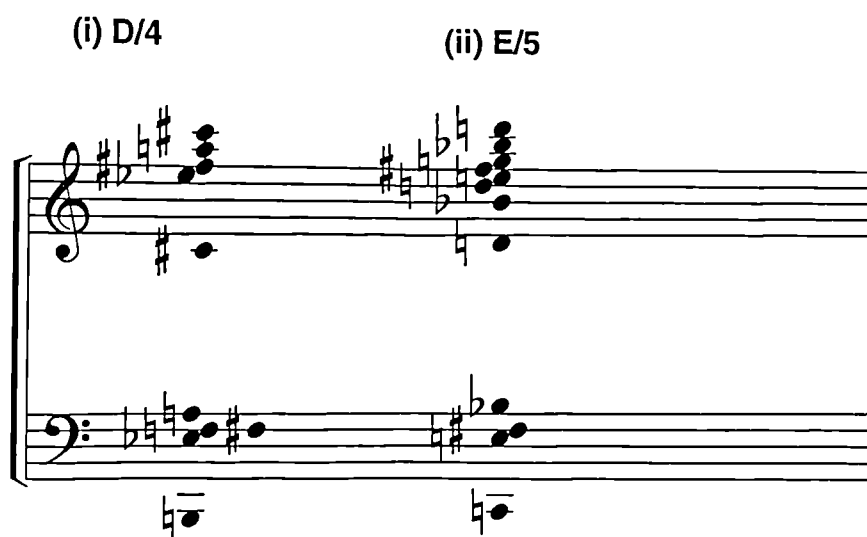
$p$   $<$   $>$   $p$   $>$

$p$   $<$   $>$   $p$   $>$

$p$   $<$   $>$   $p$   $>$

$p$   $<$   $>$   $p$   $>$

Ex. 73: *November Steps*, b. 1



Ex. 74: *Twill by Twilight*, harmony at D/4 and E/5

feature of the composer's style.

### 3.1.3 Panchromatic and microtonal writing

On occasion, vertical aggregates in Takemitsu's music may employ the full gamut of the total-chromatic simultaneously. As might be expected, such 'panchromatic' collections are especially characteristic of the 'modernist' excursions of what has been referred to as the composer's 'second period'; indeed, Yōko Narazaki even goes so far as to refer to the '“*tone cluster*” technique employed in such works as *Textures...*, *November Steps...*, etc.'<sup>259</sup> Certainly the scores of this period are especially rich in examples of chromatic saturation, especially in the form of sustained harmonies for densely divided strings – or even of 'supersaturation', with octave doublings of some pitches building up even thicker textures. The harmony from *Asterism* quoted below, for instance (Ex. 77), itself panchromatic, forms only one of several layers which gradually accumulate to generate the dense 'white noise' of *Asterism*'s 'anguishing, ultimately ecstatic climax.'<sup>260</sup>

It will be observed that this chord by no means comprises an arbitrary jumble of pitches, and in fact is formed from the superimposition of two clearly separate,

<sup>259</sup> Narazaki, op. cit., p. 86

<sup>260</sup> Dettmer, Roger, sleeve notes for RCA SB 6814



pp sempre

pp sempre

pp sempre

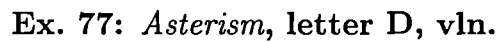
pp sempre

Harm. suono reale

Ex. 76: *A Flock Descends into the Pentagonal Garden*, letter H, b. 3

12-note idea on which *Dream/Window* is based.<sup>261</sup>

<sup>261</sup> See below, Section 3.4



Rather more rarely, the density of Takemitsu's 'cluster' formations may be still further intensified by the use of intervals smaller than the semitone. In bar 54 of *November Steps*, for instance, the violas present a cluster built up from 10 conjunct quarter-tones filling the space between  $G\sharp^3$  and a  $B\sharp^3$  a quarter-tone sharp. In a more general sense, microtones had been part of Takemitsu's musical

ord. ----- sul pont -- ord.

pp 3 mf 3

pp 3 mf 3

pp 3 mf

p sul pont pp dim.

p sul pont pp dim.

p sul pont pp dim.

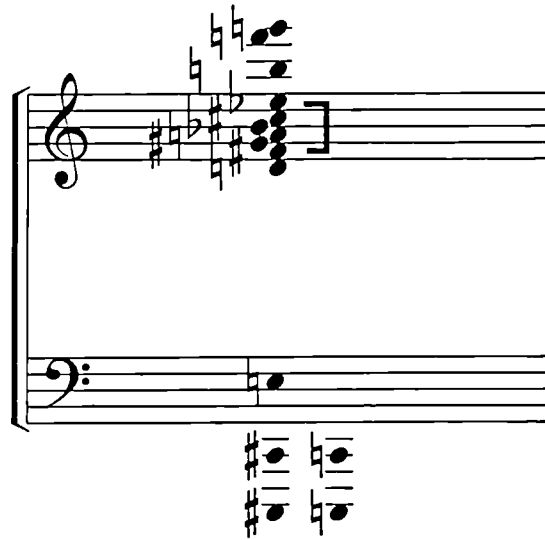
p sul pont pp dim.

Ex. 78: Green, fig. 3, bb. 4-5

vocabulary from at least as early as 1959, when he incorporated quarter-tone



Ex. 79: *Cassiopeia*, chord built up by divided strings at letter B



Ex. 80: *A Flock Descends into the Pentagonal Garden*, letter F, b. 3

inflections into the score of his *Masque* for two flutes, for which he prescribed a rather unique notation: a long-held note tied to an *acciaccatura* value of the same pitch in a different chromatic 'spelling', with the indication 'port.' above it. Subsequently, he was on several occasions to employ once more this same kind of transient microtonal usage as a means of embellishing an essentially dodecaphonic solo instrumental part; for example in the clarinet part of *Waves*, or the solo 'cello

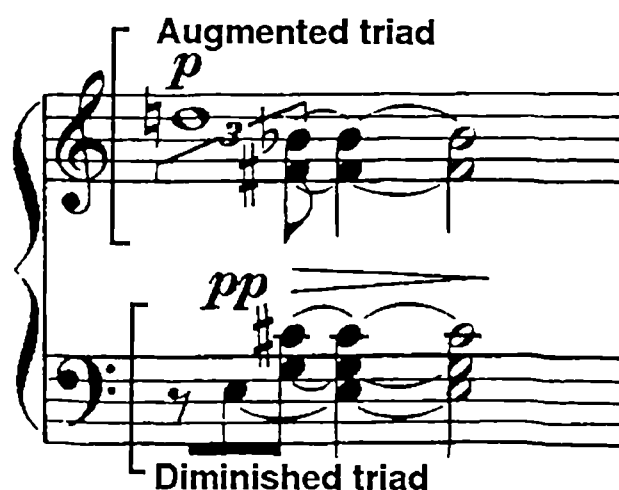


line in *Orion*. Occasionally, also, microtonal detunings have been used to give a characteristically 'tangy' sonority to Takemitsu's harp writing; for example in *Rain Spell* (1982), where quarter-tone *scordatura* of five of the harp's strings enables the instrument to play *glissandi* and what the composer refers to as 'Eolian [sic] rustlings' on what, to a Western listener, sound like octatonic or whole-tone scales with wrong notes.

The out-of-tune, 'twangy' effect created by this technique tends to remind the listener of a traditional Japanese instrument such as the *biwa* or *koto*, and likewise the other instrumental usages of microtonal 'bendings' described above may suggest a more general influence of traditional Japanese instrumental *praxis* on Takemitsu's writing for certain instruments. This theory is perhaps given a kind of corroboration by the sequence of events in the score of *November Steps*, which could be said to offer a symbolic representation of Takemitsu's indebtedness to traditional Japanese usages for his microtonal devices. Clearly, the use of microtones was more or less imperative in the solo sections of this work, if Takemitsu was to remain faithful to the idiomatic performance traditions associated with his chosen instruments. And it was therefore entirely appropriate that the harmonic world of the orchestral contribution should reflect that of the solo instruments by similarly incorporating microtonal elements. What is particularly interesting, however, is that this particular influence does not make itself immediately apparent from the outset; it is not until bar 46, with the emergence of rising quarter-tone scales in the 'cellos, that divisions smaller than the semitone make their official début in the orchestral parts, as if this were somehow the result of the soloists' 'influence' gradually having its effect on their Western counterparts. Possibly, therefore, the sequence of events gives a kind of symbolic representation of the way in which the influence of traditional Japanese intonational practices operated on Takemitsu's instrumental idiom in more general terms. The correspondence that Takemitsu discovered, as a result, between Eastern and *avant-garde* Western instrumental *praxis* is perhaps symbolised even more economically and elegantly on page 17 of *Autumn*, written for the same forces as *November Steps*; here the movement from F $\sharp$  to an E $\flat$  raised by a quarter-tone on the orchestral flute is almost exactly echoed by the parallel movement, E $\flat$  (raised by a quarter-tone) to F $\sharp$  (lowered by a quarter-tone) on the *shakuhachi* which follows immediately afterwards.

### 3.1.4 Harmonic stratification

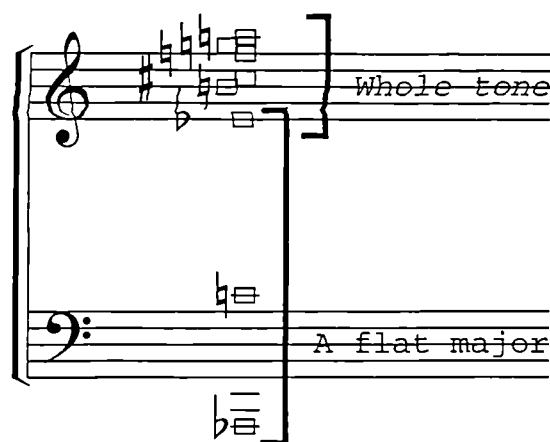
It will be recalled that the 12-note chord from *Asterism* quoted in Ex. 77 was analysed as the superimposition of a six-note, decidedly 'tonal' [0,2,3,5,7,9] set and its equally tonal inversion. In addition to suggesting the principle of chromatic complementarity of which mention was then made, such a configuration also implies that Takemitsu may conceive of certain verticals as 'layered' superimpositions of collections having each a certain independent significance of their own. In both bars 6 and 7 of the third movement of *Pause Ininterrompue*, for instance, the sustained harmony is formed from the collection [0,1,3,5,6,9]<sub>i</sub>, which may perhaps be considered a subset of the 'harmonic minor' collection [0,1,3,4,6,8,9]; in the second of these two bars, the harmony is divided between the hands into two triadic areas, an augmented triad in the right hand, and a diminished one in the left (Ex. 81). This separation of harmonic strata according to the allocation of pitches to the pianist's hands, incidentally, has parallels elsewhere in Takemitsu's music: e.g. in the fifth chord of Ex. 5 from *Distance de Fée* and the third of Ex. 12a from *Asterism*, in both of which the left-hand part is treated as an independent unit for purposes of transformation.



Ex. 81: *Pause Ininterrompue* III, b. 7

Timothy Koozin, in his analysis of the piano works, also regards certain vertical forms as constructed from superimposed strata in this manner, and indeed uses

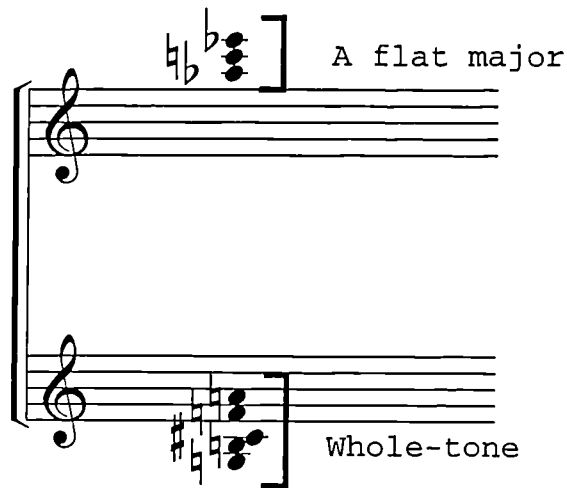
what he calls 'registral isolation' as one of his criteria for making the controversial decisions necessary to 'segment' verticals into constituent pitch-class sets<sup>262</sup>. He also notes that, in *Rain Tree Sketch*, these constituent layers may have their origins in independent source collections such as whole-tone, octatonic, etc., concluding therefore that his 'layered approach to segmentation suggests that whole-tone, octatonic and other chromatic structures govern different levels of musical strata.'<sup>263</sup> This kind of vertical segmentation of the harmony certainly increases the possibility of finding 'tonal' or 'modal' materials as constituent subsets of what on the surface may appear to be more 'freely chromatic' collections. In Ex. 70, for instance, what is globally a presentation of an [0,2,3,4,6,8] set can be seen as two superimposed units of strongly 'tonal' character, distinguished by their instrumentation: an E $\flat$  major triad in the clarinets, and the first three notes of a scale of A major in the bassoons. Similarly, both of the examples below (Exx. 82 and 83) project an identical pitch collection, which considered *in toto* consists of the eight-note set [0,1,2,4,5,6,8,10], and may be thought of either as a whole-tone scale with two added pitches a major third apart, or as eight notes of mode III. The voicing of the harmony in the two instances, however, invites another and much simpler interpretation: as a whole-tone scale over an A $\flat$  major triad in the first example, and as the same pair of elements the opposite way around in the second.



Ex. 82: *Garden Rain*, p. 5, final chord

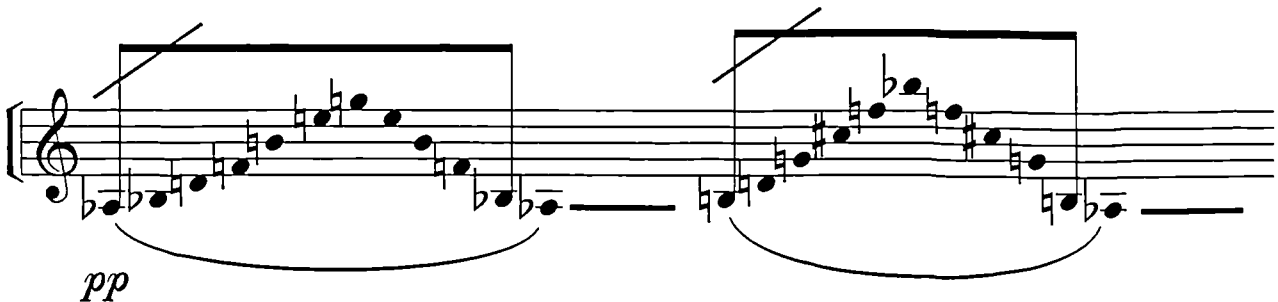
<sup>262</sup> The other is whether a constituent subset has already been 'previewed'; see Koozin (1988), p. 114

<sup>263</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 236



Ex. 83: *I Hear the Water Dreaming*, letter K, b. 4

In the following example from *Rain Spell* (Ex. 84), a similar mode of construction from recognisably independent strata may be observed in the case of an implied harmony projected horizontally by a solo monodic instrument – the first *arpeggio* suggesting an E minor triad over the third inversion of a Bb dominant seventh, the second a Bb minor triad over a G major  $\frac{6}{3}$  chord – all, of course, contained within the ambit of mode II<sup>2</sup>.



Ex. 84: *Rain Spell*, p. 11, system 2 (alto flute)

This concept of deriving a single vertical from the superimposition of harmonic 'layers' relates on a microcosmic level to the kind of stratification found at a higher level in Takemitsu's music, in which a complex texture is built up from the superimposition of a number of harmonic strands, each of which may be independent

from one another in terms of rhythm or timbre. Takemitsu himself expressed admiration for this kind of texture in the works of Debussy, who, he says

‘...combines several things at the same time, not only single things.

HT: Layers?

Yes, many things...two or three, or sometimes four together...and this music is also very spatial.’<sup>264</sup>

Takemitsu’s own term for this multi-layered quality of Debussy’s scores, as Ohtake notes, was ‘pan-focus’<sup>265</sup>, and, as hinted in a previous section<sup>266</sup>, it is this aspect of his own music which he most explicitly analogises with the formal properties of a traditional *Japanese garden*:

‘In the Western concept of music, the orchestra is regarded as one complete huge instrument. I do not follow this way. Rather, I am most interested in the orchestra for the fact that there are many sources. Therefore, orchestra can be compared to gardens [sic].’<sup>267</sup>

‘I would like to make up an orchestra that pan-focuses on sound images rather than focusing on only one musical image. An orchestra is a small sound-garden.’<sup>268</sup>

Several examples are to be found in Takemitsu’s own work of one aspect of his ‘pan-focal’ thinking, of textures built up from a number of independent strata, in which a spatial dimension often has a rôle in the compartmentalisation of sound-events. In *Coral Island*, for instance, densely divided strings are used to provide a static, sonorous backdrop against which are projected foreground events for other groups of instruments, particularly tintinnabulatory percussion sounds of contrastingly short duration. Here the unorthodox layout of instrumental forces assists such treatment of the orchestra as pluralistic sound source; but Takemitsu was

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<sup>264</sup> Takemitsu, Cronin and Tann, op. cit., p. 208

<sup>265</sup> Ohtake, op. cit., p. 7

<sup>266</sup> See Section 2.6

<sup>267</sup> Takemitsu, ‘Yume to kazu’, p. 26; translation from Ogawa, op. cit., p. 113

<sup>268</sup> Ibid., p. 27; translation by Taniyama, op. cit., p. 82

equally capable of achieving similar ends with a conventionally distributed orchestral apparatus, and a particularly striking instance of this occurs at G/4-5 of *Far Calls. Coming, Far!* Here the strings and brass sustain, *pianissimo*, a Bb-F-Db-Ab harmony, while above them the woodwind have a kind of chorale of unrelated, dissonant chords in even crotchets, and the violin soloist a series of rhythmically identical sextuplet gestures. Only when the last, sustained chord of the woodwind fades out does one really become aware of the presence of this ‘minor seventh’ harmonic backdrop, the seemingly dissonant effect of the global harmonic texture at this point magically dissolving into the unexpectedly ‘modal’ and familiar. Here, therefore, it is not simply a question of a stratification of the harmony into two relatively autonomous, timbrally and rhythmically distinct areas, but at the same time a hierarchical division into harmonic foreground and background, and one in which the latter – to telling effect – at the end emerges to assume the rôle of the former.

### 3.1.5 Sequence and side-slipping of harmony

During the discussion of the use of repetition in Takemitsu’s scores in section 2.1 above, it was observed that the composer regularly presents repeats of ‘blocks’ of material in a transposed form, and passing reference was made to the fact that such transposed repetitions may immediately succeed the original from which they are derived, giving rise to a pattern somewhat akin to the ‘sequence’ in tonal music.<sup>269</sup> Such a device is indeed very much a standard feature of Takemitsu’s harmonic language, and can be found at every stage of his career. Ex. 85, for instance, shows a *typical use of the device from the earliest phase of the composer’s development*: a bar in which the second half is simply the first transposed down a major third. It will be observed, however, that the composer departs from exact replication of the material at the designated transposition; in a fashion that is entirely in accord with his principle of effecting subtle changes to materials when they are repeated, an F# is substituted for the Eb which should rightly appear as the lowest pitch of the fourth chord in the left hand.

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<sup>269</sup> Although, clearly, the use of this term in the present context should not be taken to imply the kind of ongoing tonal coherence that is associated with the application of the term to classical common practice

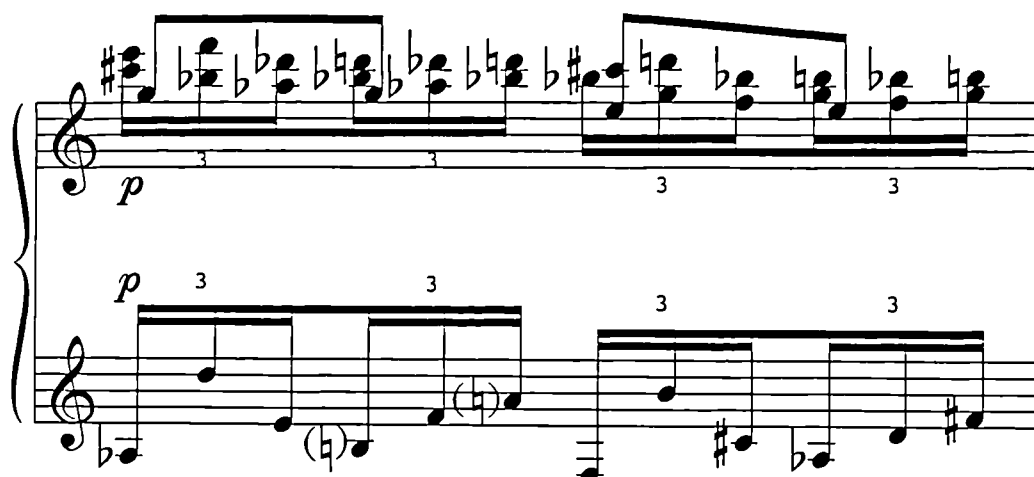


Ex. 85: *Pause Ininterrompue* III, b. 5

As Ex. 86 illustrates, Takemitsu was still doing more or less precisely the same thing twenty-three years later, in 1982. The bar quoted here is constructed in almost exactly the same fashion as that in the previous example, except that the interval of transposition is a minor rather than a major third – an interval which, as Koozin points out, maintains the transposition of the octatonic mode employed intact. The whole bar, in other words, remains in ‘mode II<sup>2</sup>’, excepting the A $\sharp$  and F $\sharp$  in the left hand, which are pitches foreign to the prevailing mode, and whose placing fulfills the condition laid down by Koozin for the introduction of such alien elements, in that they form semitone relationships with the ‘bass’. (This bar is in itself a transposed repetition, down a perfect fifth, of b. 41 of the work.)

In its minimum form, the material repeated in transposition may consist of no more than a single harmony; in this instance, the result is a kind of harmonic parallelism, in which a whole harmony is simply transposed globally by a given intervallic factor. Miyoshi, in the article already referred to, draws attention to one such global transposition of harmonic materials, occurring between bars 4 and 5 of *Dream/Window*, where the essential harmony of the latter is simply the harmony of the preceding bar transposed down a major second.<sup>270</sup> Such progressions invite comparison with the so-called ‘side-slippings (steppings)’ popular during the lat-

<sup>270</sup> Miyoshi, op. cit., p. 131



Ex. 86: *Rain Tree Sketch*, b. 46

ter phase of nineteenth-century tonality, and Takemitsu's usages do indeed often recall the somewhat lubricious quality with which his Romantic and Impressionist forebears tended to endow this device. This is especially true when the harmonic movement is downward, as in the last three chords of Ex. 87, and even more emphasised when the intervallic factor is a semitone, as between the final two chords of this example. Furthermore, the suave, 'barber shop' timbre of *a capella* men's voices in this particular instance intensifies still more the 'nineteenth century' associations of the technique employed.

Takemitsu's harmony does of course, on occasion, side-step upwards as well as downwards. In the example below, from the much later *I Hear the Water Dreaming* (1987), the second harmony ([0,2,3,6,8]) is first transposed down a minor third, and then twice transposed upwards by the interval of a minor second (Ex. 88).

### 3.1.6 Fixed pitches and 'harmonic fields'

Occasionally, albeit rather rarely, one comes across passages in Takemitsu's music in which individual pitch classes always appear in a fixed register (or registers, in the case of pitch classes doubled at the octave), as a result of which 'registral locking', the section projects an implicit, static harmony for as long as the device is adhered to. In the extract from the piano work *For Away* shown in Ex. 89, for instance, each of the twelve chromatic pitch classes is allocated to a



Ex. 87: *Wind Horse*, III, b. 12

specific octave from the  $A\flat$  after the dotted bar onwards, so that the whole passage from this point forward projects the static, panchromatic harmonic field shown in Ex. 90. It will be observed that the pitches of this twelve-note collection are not entirely arbitrarily distributed; the core of the pitch-field, from the  $B\flat^1$  to the  $A\flat^4$ , comprises all the pitches forming the octatonic mode  $II^1$ , with the remaining four pitches of the total chromatic consigned to the margins of the keyboard on either side – fulfilling Koozin’s condition that ‘such foreign elements are most often found

The image shows a musical score for four staves, likely for a piano. The top two staves are in treble clef, and the bottom two are in bass clef. The time signature is 6/8. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The music features a complex, rapid melodic line with many accidentals. Dynamics are marked as *pp* (pianissimo) at the beginning of each staff, followed by a crescendo to *poco mfp* (poco mezzo-forte-piano) and then a decrescendo. The notation includes many beamed sixteenth and thirty-second notes, creating a dense, shimmering texture.

Ex. 88: *I Hear the Water Dreaming*, letter J, b. 5

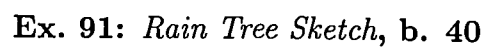
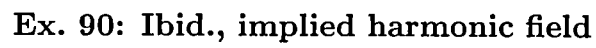
in registral extremities.<sup>271</sup>

Here, obviously, the uses to which the sustaining pedal is put emphasise the underlying implied harmony by prolonging the constituent pitches. The same is even more true of the following extract from *Rain Tree Sketch* (Ex. 91), in which the right pedal remains depressed throughout, so that the pitches of the rapid *ostinati* for the two hands merge into one another in a blur of resonances, audibly projecting the thirteen-note harmonic field shown in Ex. 92 (actually composed of eleven pitch classes with two doubled at the octave.)

This capacity of a field of registrally fixed pitches to generate an implied static

<sup>271</sup> Koozin (1991), p. 126





### 3.1.7 'Iconic' harmonies

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Ex. 92: Ibid., implied harmonic field

Ex. 93: *Cassiopeia*, woodwind 'mobiles', p. 6 and implied harmonic field

poser's manner of handling his harmonic materials in certain works is the use of a particular harmonic form (or forms) as a recurrent type which may serve as a reference point for the unfolding of the musical structure, and may even be perceptible as such to the listener on occasion. Other commentators have also drawn attention to this practice: Ogawa, for instance, in his commentary on *Vocalise II* from *Wind Horse*, observes that here 'there exists a pillar chord. IC (0,2,4,5,7,9)' which 'is put at the end of A, A', C sections and functions as a pivot point of changes'<sup>272</sup>; while, in more universal terms, Koozin notes that '...through contextual emphasis and cycles of repetition, specific pitch-class sets acquire increasing

<sup>272</sup> Ogawa, op. cit., p. 116

referential meaning as the composition unfolds in time'<sup>273</sup>, and, with specific reference to the solo piano works, that 'recurrent pitch-class sets introduced early in the piece acquire increased referential meaning as the work proceeds.'<sup>274</sup> Koozin, it is true, is here speaking in a more generalised sense of configurations of pitches, rather than solely of vertical forms, but his references to 'referential sonorities' nevertheless by definition include the latter. To avoid any confusion in the case of the present enquiry, I propose to refer to these recurrent vertical types as *iconic harmonies*.

An early example of the type of thing that is meant by this term has in fact already been quoted. Ex. 69 in Section 3.1.2 illustrated the commonly found [0,2,3,4,6,8] collection with a bar containing three side-slipping chords, each projecting the set, in the second movement of *Pause Ininterrompue*. This harmony is also found in a number of other places in the same movement, and always presented in the same manner, that is to say, with an [0,2,3] or 'minor' trichord superimposed above an [0,2,4] or 'major' one. Its first appearance is in bar 8 where, as will later be shown<sup>275</sup>, it is derived from the work's twelve-note series; thereafter, in addition to the three appearances already quoted, there are three more when the material of Ex. 69 is heard again in a transposed retrograde in bars 32-33. In the context of the movement, then, this is an 'iconic' harmony – one of two such employed in this particular movement, in fact, the other being the collection [0,1,3,4,8], which may be thought of as a minor triad plus added second and major seventh, as may clearly be seen from the form in which it appears in bar 28 (Ex. 94). There are further appearances of this second referential type, revoiced, in bars 35 and 39, plus an appearance in bar 26 which, despite the addition of an extraneous E $\flat$ , is clearly another statement of the same essential type.

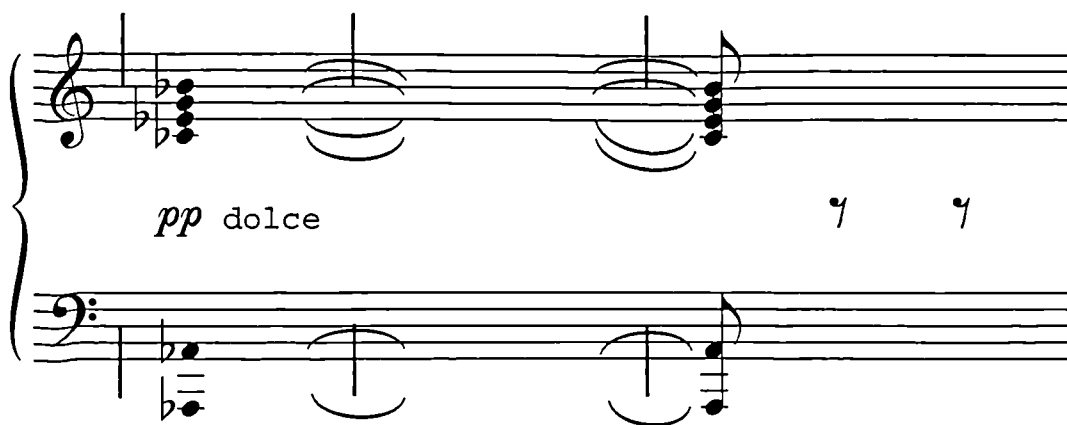
Certain other 'iconic' harmonies have also appeared coincidentally in examples quoted in earlier sections. The six-note 'acoustic' chord [0,1,3,5,7,9] shown in Exx. 73 and 74, from *November Steps* and *Twill by Twilight* respectively, is a characteristic harmonic feature of both of the works from which those examples are taken; while another 'iconic' type in *November Steps* is the second chord (B)

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<sup>273</sup> Koozin (1988), p. 4

<sup>274</sup> Ibid., p. 80

<sup>275</sup> See below, Section 3.4, Ex. 140



Ex. 94: *Pause Ininterrompue II*, bb. 28-30

of Ex. 42, [0,2,3,4,5,6,8], here shown in its typical form of a second inversion of the dominant seventh on Bb, over which are superimposed the first three notes of a scale of E minor. And the [0,2,3,4,6,8] form to whose use in *Pause Ininterrompue* attention has been drawn above is also regularly encountered in *Green*, the second chord of Ex. 2a providing an illustration of one such usage.

There is actually a slight difference in the manner in which Takemitsu handles each of the two 'iconic' forms identified above in the second movement of *Pause Ininterrompue*. As already noted, the first type, [0,2,3,4,6,8], is always presented in more or less the same voicing, being subjected to the operation of transposition only; but the second type, [0,1,3,4,8], is both transposed and revoiced. While the first is always readily recognisable as a more or less fixed musical 'object', therefore, the second is present more in the manner of an underlying compositional feature. It thus becomes necessary to refine the model of the 'iconic' harmony somewhat, and admit of two sub-categories to the overall definition: on the one hand, of single, invariant projections of a given harmonic form, and on the other, of diverse surface projections of a single, underlying harmonic archetype. In *Far Calls. Coming, Far!*, the same recurrent harmony is subjected to both of these kinds of treatment at different points in the work. On the one hand, it is revoiced in at least four different ways, yielding on each occasion a different harmonic character, often with strongly tonal implications: thus, in Ex. 95, version (1.) has a kind of 'augmented sixth' in its lowest voices; (2.) superimposes an F major chord over a B major triad with

added second; (3.) is essentially a transposition of (2.) a minor third lower, but with the lower chord now in 'open' position, and (4.) has a dominant seventh in its four lowest parts.

1.)                  2.)                  3.)                  4.)

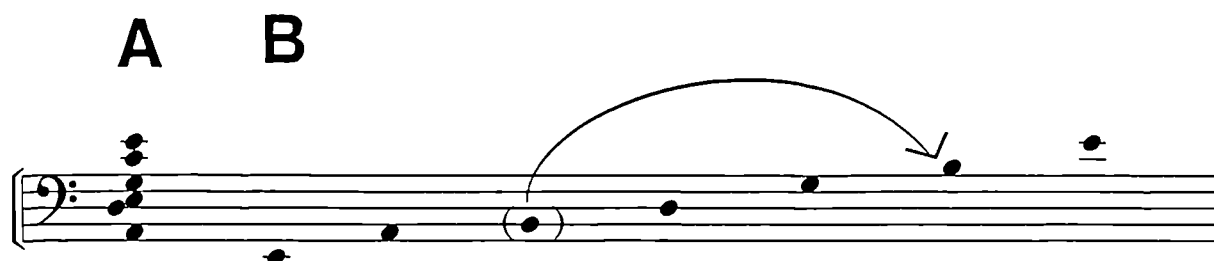
**Ex. 95: *Far Calls. Coming, Far!:* variant voicings of same harmonic type**

A diversity of voicings is thus obtained through manipulation of this same basic seven-note set. At the same time, however, versions (1.) and (4.) are each used as the initial chords of a pair of recurrent harmonic progressions, and within the context of these, the voicing of the harmonies remains constant – they are thus truly ‘iconic’ in the more exclusive sense of invariant projections of a fixed harmonic type. This may be observed by reference back to Ex. 8 (Section 2.2.2), which charts the various appearances of the progression of three harmonies that begins with version (1.)

It will also not have escaped the reader’s notice that some of the harmonic forms described as ‘iconic’ in the preceding paragraphs have been encountered before in the discussion of the various standard harmonic preferences of the composer. Admittedly it is true that there are others that do not fit into any of the categories previously established – the harmony in Ex. 95, for instance, an inversion of [0,1,3,5,6,7,9], could at a pinch be classified as a seven-note subset of ‘mode VI’, but has more the effect of an isolated and distinctive sonority, which of course admirably suits the ‘referential’ purpose for which it is intended. In other instances, however, Takemitsu selects for this kind of privileged emphasis collections from



the gamut of familiar types to which attention has already been drawn at the beginning of this chapter. The [0,2,3,4,6,8] collection chosen in the second movement of *Pause Ininterrompue* was a case in point, but there are instances of the use of even more basic and readily recognisable harmonic forms than this. In *Vers, l'arc-en-ciel, Palma*, for instance, the most important referential harmony is simply a version of the 'panpentonic' collection [0,2,4,7,9], typically voiced in such a manner as to emphasise its relationship both with the cycle of fourths/fifths, and with the quartally-tuned open strings of the guitar, which of course themselves project a 'panpentatonic' collection. Ex. 96 demonstrates the latter relationship: chord A is a transposition up a fourth of the first six notes of B, which comprise the pitches of the lowest five strings on the guitar, plus a doubling at the octave below of the uppermost (B $\flat$ ).



Ex. 96: *Vers, l'arc-en-ciel, Palma*: referential harmony (A) and its derivation from open strings of guitar (B)

This verticalisation of the pentatonic scale also plays an important rôle in *A String around Autumn*, where there are more than forty vertical occurrences of the panpentatonic collection *per se*, as well as frequent usages of the substitute, six note diatonic 'supersets' [0,2,4,5,7,9] and [0,2,3,5,7,9]. The usages to which these harmonic forms are put fall into both categories encompassed by the 'iconic' definition: on the one hand, there are revoicings and transpositions of the basic archetype; on the other, repeated events in which the essential features of the harmony remain invariant – a particularly striking example of the latter being a formula repeated five times to accompany the work's principal theme on the solo viola (Ex. 97), in which the first part of the rising melodic line is supported by a 'minor' voicing of the panpentonic chord, and the final two notes by one of its

supersets, [0,2,3,5,7,9], always in such a relationship that the pitch equivalent to the '0' of the latter is a minor third higher than its counterpart in the former.<sup>276</sup>

Ex. 97: *A String Around Autumn*, Letter 'J', bb. 1-2

Other familiar elements of Takemitsu's harmonic language are similarly assigned the rôle of ready-made iconic objects in works by the composer. One of

<sup>276</sup> A similar referential use of a harmonic pairing is observed by Ogawa in *Vocalise II* of *Wind Horse*, where he notes that the 'frequently used chord (0,1,5,7,10)' [sic; = 0,1,3,6,8i] 'is usually used adjacent to the pillar chord.' (Ogawa, loc. cit.)

the most striking, perhaps, is the collection [0,2,4,5,8] which appears several times in the string quartet *A Way A Lone* (1981) – striking because the aural impression given by this five-note ‘acoustic’ subset is rather of an added-note version of the most famous ‘iconic’ harmony in the whole of the Western musical canon, the ‘unclassifiable’ opening chord of Wagner’s *Tristan*. Takemitsu in fact does use the unembellished ‘Tristan chord’ on a number of occasions – including at least twice at the same pitch as the original, in *I Hear the Water Dreaming* (fourth bar of letter G) and *Tree Line* (second bar of letter F.)

### 3.1.8 Conclusions

As in Section 2.6, this present section will attempt to suggest the possible influences, Eastern or Western, which may have had a formative effect on the aspects of Takemitsu’s harmonic language discussed above.

The use of scalar forms in the composer’s music may be dealt with under two broad headings: one comprising the scalar types common to Messiaen’s system of ‘modes of limited transposition’, and the other the remaining scalar types, those common in other words to Western ‘classical’ and popular music, or, in the case of some of the pentatonic modes, to certain Oriental musics. Turning to the latter case first, one finds in Takemitsu’s usage here a mixture of Eastern and Western influence that is perhaps almost impossible to extricate. The use of conjunct degrees of modes, especially pentatonic modes, to generate cluster-like chordal forms which Western theory would regard as ‘non-functional’ is certainly a feature of several kinds of traditional Oriental musics, including some Japanese genres. For example, in the traditional Japanese *gagaku* ensemble, the materials contributed by the mouth-organ or *shō* are confined to a standard gamut of eleven ‘given’ verticals which sound to the Western ear like slightly off-key pentatonic or diatonic clusters.<sup>277</sup> A direct influence of such forms on Takemitsu has indeed been suggested by at least one writer, who notes, *re* the pentatonic harmonies of *Garden Rain*, that ‘so many of these sonorities resemble the pentatonic voicings which the *shō* is capable of producing’<sup>278</sup>. At the same time, however, it is more than likely that Takemitsu’s first encounter with these sonorities would not have been through

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<sup>277</sup> Cf., for example, Kishibe, op. cit., p. 36

<sup>278</sup> Wilson, Dana Richard, op. cit., p. 215

direct contact with his own musical traditions, but via the intermediary of Western composers such as Debussy, whose ‘non-functional’ modal harmony of course owes so much to his own experience of Oriental musics such as the *gamelan* which he heard at the Paris Exposition in 1889. Certainly it is known that in his youth Takemitsu would have been very familiar with the harmonic methods of French music, since both he and his friend Suzuki studied the *Traité d’harmonie théorique et pratique* (1921) of the French composer and academic Théodore Dubois (1837-1924), which had been translated into Japanese by Kishio Hirao in 1947 and which, ‘after the war, was the starting point [in Japan] for study of the technique of the French school in particular’<sup>279</sup> in Japan. And even the vestigial remnants of traditional Japanese modality which are found in Takemitsu’s very earliest pieces were probably arrived at not from ‘primary sources’, but, as Koozin has suggested, via the influence of the Japanese ‘Nationalist’ school and in particular that of Takemitsu’s brief period of study with Kiyose:

‘...it seems likely that the teacher influenced Takemitsu not only in his “Nationalist” outlook, but also in his use of a scale-based compositional idiom... Takemitsu has described the music of Kiyose as pentatonic, but not purely pentatonic. Instead, the pentatonic scale is used as a source collection for experimentation.’<sup>280</sup>

These may seem rather tortuous routes for the influence of his own native tradition to enter a composer’s vocabulary – particularly in the case of Debussy’s mediation, where Oriental influences have ended up being returned to their point of origin in what Takemitsu has described as ‘a “reciprocal action” – musical art which was re-imported to Japan.’<sup>281</sup> But it should be realised that, especially prior to Takemitsu’s own ‘discovery’ of traditional Japanese music in the 1960s, the music of Western composers such as Debussy would have been much more familiar and ‘everyday’ to him than the relative obscurities of the former – as he himself has tellingly expressed it, ‘Oh, these days the *shakuhachi* is as exotic an

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<sup>279</sup> Funayama, ‘Takemitsu Tōru Kenkyū Nōto 5’, p. 48

<sup>280</sup> Koozin (1988), p. 285

<sup>281</sup> Ohtake, op. cit., p. 6

instrument in Japan as it is in the West.'<sup>282</sup> And when one contrasts the above comparison of a Western scholar between the harmonies of *Garden Rain* and those of the *shō*, with the comment of Kishibe, in the passage on that instrument referred to above, that its harmonies 'give off a Debussy-like quality'<sup>283</sup>, one realises with a shock how accurate Takemitsu's assessment of the situation is, how thoroughly a hundred years' pursuit of 'Herodian' mimicry of the West have so alienated the Japanese from their own musical culture, that the only comprehensible comparison that may be offered for it is an imitation 'Orientalism' by a Westerner.

If Takemitsu's study of Dubois did have any influence on his harmonic style, however, it was an influence that was soon to be overshadowed by one that had far more lasting repercussions:

'... in the harmony of the works from *Distance de Fée* to *Hika*, no vestiges are heard of Dubois' ideal of classical composure. The faint echo that one hears in these works is that of Olivier Messiaen's new modes and methods of handling rhythm.'<sup>284</sup>

Most listeners would, I think, agree that the expression 'faint echo' here is something of a euphemistic understatement. The influence of Olivier Messiaen on the harmonic language of these works – expressing itself most audibly, of course, in the use of octatonicism – seems so obvious as to confound any attempt at refutation. It is true that the composer himself has affirmed that he 'made use of the octatonic collection before ever hearing it in the music of Messiaen, and that he arrived at it intuitively, using it as well as other modes of his own invention'<sup>285</sup>, and that this may be not entirely implausible – 'mode II' is, after all, not uniquely Messiaen's intellectual property, as he himself admits in his *Technique*, and if other composers such as Rimsky-Korsakov, Scriabin, Debussy and Stravinsky were able to arrive at it, there is no reason to suppose that Takemitsu should not have been capable of doing the same. At the same time, however, it has already been noted

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<sup>282</sup> Takemitsu, Kronin and Tann, op. cit., p. 212. Cf. the following delightfully tongue-in-cheek remark of Yukio Mishima in his 'Decay of the Angel': 'Keiko had become energetic in her pursuit of Japanese culture. It was her new exoticism.' (Penguin edn., p. 717)

<sup>283</sup> Kishibe, loc. cit.

<sup>284</sup> Funayama, loc. cit.

<sup>285</sup> Koozin (1991), p. 125

that Takemitsu was aware of Messiaen's music as early as 1950, when a score of the *Huit Préludes* came into the possession of Ichiyanagi; this was the same year as that in which Takemitsu's *Futatsu no Rento* was composed, and it would seem hard to disagree with Akiyama when he asserts that the second movement of the work, in which the octatonic mode appears, is 'music in which the influence of Messiaen's *Préludes* can be seen.'<sup>286</sup> Furthermore, when one takes into account the subsequent *Jikken Kōbō* premières of Messiaen's music, and the publication of Hirao's Japanese translation of the French composer's *Technique* in 1954, – as well as the actual aural effect of much of Takemitsu's subsequent (and ubiquitous) writing in 'MTL2', and the demonstrable fact that he occasionally makes use of some of the other 'modes of limited transposition' – then the evidence that he did not remain uninfluenced by Messiaen's example in the use of such modal forms seems incontrovertible.

The 6-20 collection occasionally employed by Takemitsu, on the other hand, has a number of possible precursors. In particular, twelve-note series formed from the combination of two such hexachords may be dated at least as far back as the time of Liszt, the famous augmented triad 'series' of whose *Faust* symphony falls into this category. This same basic combination can also yield a twelve-note series consisting of two major and two minor triads, a little-known usage of which occurs in the *Prélude à l'Après-midi d'un Faune* of Debussy<sup>287</sup>. But it is of course in the Twentieth century, and in the hands of the Second Viennese School, that the 'hexachordally combinatorial' properties of the collection make it a popular choice for the construction of dodecaphonic sets. The series of Webern's Concerto, Op. 24, and of both Schoenberg's *Suite* Op. 29 and his *Ode to Napoleon*, for instance, may all be parsed as the combination of two transpositions of this 6-20 collection.

Takemitsu's practice of enriching modally derived harmony by the addition of extraneous chromatic notes also has historical antecedents. The regular combination of chromatic and whole-tone elements in Debussy's harmonic language, for example, more or less guarantees that Takemitsu's favoured 7-33 collection is bound to appear on occasion, and such does indeed prove to be the case. In the famous opening bars of *Jeux*, for instance, the initial C♯ of the ostinato figure for

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<sup>286</sup> Akiyama, 'Nihon no Sakkyokutachi', p. 255

<sup>287</sup> Fig. 12, b. 2 (first half), horns and violins

horn and harps clashes semitonally with the ‘panhexatonic’ chord for the woodwind, momentarily yielding Takemitsu’s favourite vertical sonority. At the same time, another commentator has suggested that Takemitsu’s semitonal additions to modal forms may take their cue from Messiaen’s suggestions in the *Technique de mon Langage Musical*, and that his

‘...practice of moving toward chromatic saturation from an octatonic-referential base through a network of semitone relations would not have displeased Messiaen, who discusses the disguising of a mode through the inclusion of foreign notes, as well as the combining of different modes.’<sup>288</sup>

Before quitting this subject of Takemitsu’s preoccupation with modalism, mention should be made of one other, and rather surprising, source of inspiration for his experiments in this field. According to one of Takemitsu’s interviews with Takashi Tachibana, in 1961 the bass player of a visiting English folk group, The Kingston Trio, approached Takemitsu with a request for some arrangements of Japanese folk songs, and happened to mention that an acquaintance of his, an American jazz musician, had written ‘an interesting book’, of which he was carrying a typewritten copy in the hope of finding a publisher. Perhaps, he enquired, Takemitsu might be interested in reading it? Thus it transpired that Takemitsu – despite his limited command of English at the time – became ‘one of the first people in the world’ to read *The Lydian Chromatic Concept of Tonal Organisation for Improvisation* by the jazz musician and composer George Russell (b. 1923).<sup>289</sup> The effect on Takemitsu’s harmonic thinking appears to have been a profound one; in the composer’s own words, ‘Russell’s way of thinking about music, in particular the Lydian chromatic concept, has had a strong influence ... Whenever, wherever [I am asked], I assert that my music has received influences from George Russell.’<sup>290</sup> Funayama notes that this influence is implicitly acknowledged in the title of *The Dorian Horizon*, which refers not only to the Greek mode ‘but also might not be unconnected with the “Lydian Chromatic Concept” of George Russell which is introduced here’<sup>291</sup>, and elsewhere the same commentator observes that ‘Takemitsu’s

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<sup>288</sup> Koozin (1988), p. 294

<sup>289</sup> Tachibana, Takashi: ‘Takemitsu Tōru: Ongaku Sōzō e no Tabi’, *Bungakukai*, July 1994, p. 232

<sup>290</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 231

<sup>291</sup> Funayama, ‘Takemitsu Tōru Kenkyū Nōto 9’, p. 64

“pantonality” was influenced not by [Rudolph] Réti but by the jazz composer and theorist George Russell.<sup>292</sup> Russell’s work is complex, and a detailed investigation of its impact on Takemitsu’s modal thinking would require a vast study far beyond the scope of his thesis; but, when one considers that Takemitsu brackets it together with Messiaen’s *Technique* as ‘palpably the finest books dealing with music written this century’<sup>293</sup>, one suspects that such a study would be a highly rewarding one for the deeper understanding of Takemitsu’s treatment of modal materials in his ‘freely chromatic’ context.

Turning next to the dense vertical sonorities of Takemitsu’s ‘cluster’ style of the 1960s, as typified by the sustained string backdrops of *Coral Island*, the most obvious rôle-model for these would appear to be found in the work of certain members of the contemporary European *avant-garde* of that period, above all György Ligeti; as James Gibson records, ‘several scholars have commented on the similarity between long sustained string passages in Takemitsu’s music and the string works of Ligeti’<sup>294</sup>. On the other hand, Dana Wilson thinks such comparisons with Ligeti ‘superficial’, since the latter was ‘generating the same tension-release large-scale pulsation of most Western music’<sup>295</sup> – although admitting a similarity in the two composers’ handling of textural techniques. There are obvious comparisons also with Xenakis – with whom Takemitsu, as already described, was personally acquainted – and of course Penderecki, to whose experiments Funayama admits that some of the string writing in *Textures* may be ‘not unconnected’, although observing at the same time that Takemitsu’s work does not aim at the ‘timbral “effects” of the Polish tone-cluster school’, but rather weaves melodic, harmonic and rhythmic cells into a ‘texture of light and shadow’<sup>296</sup>. At all events, the precedents for Takemitsu’s ‘cluster’ experiments are clearly all Western; by contrast with which, his occasional flirtations with microtonality suggest a synthetic absorption of influences from East and West. Admittedly, the quarter-tone clusters he occasionally employs are simply denser infillings of the chromatic space; but the microtonal ‘bendings’ of solo instrumental lines for expressive effect, or the

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<sup>292</sup> ‘Takemitsu Tōru Kenkyū Nōto 3’, p. 66

<sup>293</sup> Tachibana, op. cit., p. 230

<sup>294</sup> Gibson, op. cit., p. 91, note

<sup>295</sup> Wilson, op. cit., p. 39

<sup>296</sup> Funayama, ‘Takemitsu Tōru Kenkyū Nōto 6’, p. 69



mistuned harps found in certain pieces, are – as already suggested above<sup>297</sup> – the fruit of Takemitsu's discovery of a common ground between two traditions: that of traditional Japanese instrumental *praxis* on the one hand, and the 'extended techniques' of Western *avant-garde* instrumental writing on the other.

Takemitsu's harmonic parallelism has a number of precedents, chiefly from the period when composers were experimenting with 'extended tonality' at the turn of the last century. *Nuages*, for instance, the first of Debussy's *Trois Nocturnes* for orchestra, affords examples of both of the characteristic ways in which Takemitsu exploits this device: the 'sequential' repetition of a whole passage (bars 33-34 repeated a tone higher as bars 35-36), and the side-slipping of an individual vertical harmony (the famous parallel dominant ninths in bar 14). The lugubrious sound of chromatically side-slipping harmony was of course also popular with composers of a more expressive, Teutonic bent, foreshadowing some of the uses to which Takemitsu was to put the device. Alban Berg in particular loved the 'Romantic' melancholy evoked by chains of sinking chords; his Op. 1 *Sonata* for piano, for example, is full of chromatic side-slippings, and he even manages briefly to introduce a progression of semitonally descending 'dominant' chords into the quasi-'serial' world of the second movement of the *Lyric Suite* (b. 144).

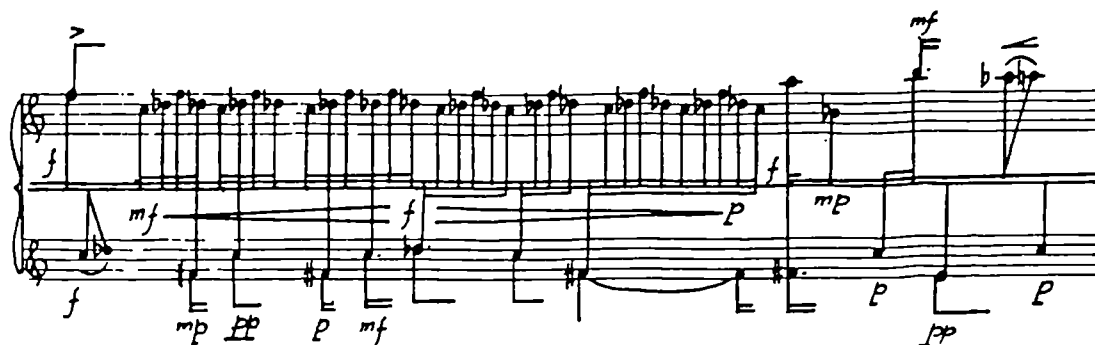
The practice of assigning pitches to a fixed octave in which they remain 'locked' for the duration of a given passage may be traced back at least as far as Webern, the opening of whose *Symphony*, Op. 21 could be said to project a single, twelve-note 'harmonic field' on this account, although of course the contrapuntal nature of the writing here produces a quite different effect. However, the device as used by Takemitsu, to project a static harmony by means of free movement between registrally locked pitch classes, is a post-Webernian development, given theoretical expression by Pousseur in his 'Outline of a Method'<sup>298</sup>, and exploited in practical terms by such composers as Boulez and Berio, as well as of course by Pousseur himself. But it is also possible to speculate on a second putative source for Takemitsu's adoption of this technique, at least in his piano work *For Away*. This was written after the composer's trip to Indonesia in 1972, and, as Noriko Ohtake points out,

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<sup>297</sup> Section 3.1.3

<sup>298</sup> Pousseur, Henri: 'Outline of a Method', in: *Die Reihe*, III (Musical Craftmanship) (Vienna: Universal Edition, 1957), pp. 44-88

‘incorporates a gamelan-like section as his personal statement in memory of the experience. The melody in this section is distributed in a manner similar to the melodic division between two metallophones...in gamelan music.’<sup>299</sup> If the composer’s experience of the interlocking, ‘hocket’ patterns of gamelan music could suggest to him this translation of the device to the piano keyboard (Ex. 98), might not the fixed pitches and (to Western ears) ‘gapped’ scalar tunings of the gamelan instruments likewise have suggested the free meanderings between the registrally locked pitches of Takemitsu’s ‘harmonic fields’ in this and other parts of the score?



Ex. 98: *For Away*, b. 36

However, the possibility that this ‘Eastern’ model influenced Takemitsu’s harmonic thinking, like the possibility of a relationship between some of his verticalised scalar forms and the chords of the *shō*, is a purely speculative one. As the above paragraphs have demonstrated, most of the sources for Takemitsu’s harmonic practice would appear to be located firmly within the mainstream Western ‘Classical’ tradition – hardly a surprising outcome, perhaps, given the thoroughly ‘Occidental’ nature of the very concept of harmony itself. And even allowing for the possible *exceptions to the rule suggested above*, it is more than likely that one at least of these influences – the verticalisation of modal forms to yield non-functional harmony – did not reach Takemitsu directly from its source, but rather through the

<sup>299</sup> Ohtake, op. cit., p. 84. Takemitsu must, however, have been aware at least of the sound of gamelan music some time before his trip to Bali, since he incorporated a recording of it – together with various other kinds of ‘ethnic’ musics – into his soundtrack for the film *Shinju Ten no Amishima* (‘Double Suicide’, dir. Masahiro Shinoda, 1969)

mediation of Western composers such as Debussy, at least at the beginning of the composer's career.

### 3.2 Counterpoint

It does not seem to be inviting too much controversy to claim that Takemitsu was not an enthusiastic contrapuntist. The types of texture favoured in his music tended to be conceived vertically rather than horizontally: melody plus accompaniment for example, or the kind of chorale-like homophony of strands of chords in which the upper line carries the melodic significance, and the lower parts tend to be heard as 'colouration' in a rather 'Messiaenic' manner. Denser textures are more often than not built up by the superimposition of a number of individual strands of this type, creating the kind of stratified, 'pan-focal' texture discussed above in Section 3.1.4; where they are instead built up from the accumulation of individual lines, however, the overall effect tends to be one of a densely polyphonic, impenetrable 'web' of sound, rather than of clearly defined linear voices.

There are, however, a few exceptions to this general preference. Takemitsu's brief love-affair with the *pointillisme* then fashionable amongst the Western *avant-garde* in the 1960s more or less determined that he should give greater weight to clearly differentiated instrumental lines in such works as *Sacrifice*, *Valeria* and *Stanza I* – although, even here, the counterpoint may be one of block chords rather than isolated pitches. And in his works for smaller combinations, especially where instruments capable of providing harmonic support are absent, a true counterpoint of clearly audible independent lines does sometimes emerge. The violin duo *Rocking Mirror Daybreak* (1983), for instance, is mainly 'horizontally' conceived, and – perhaps in due deference to the 'seriousness' with which its medium has become historically invested – Takemitsu's string quartet *A Way A Lone* contains several passages where all four instruments are given independent contrapuntal voices, for example at bar 130 and bar 161. And there is also one contrapuntal device in particular of which Takemitsu made use at every stage in his compositional career, and in works for all combinations of forces, to which the succeeding section will be devoted.

### 3.2.1 Canonic writing

The appearance of so humble a musical device as audible canonic imitation in a musical language of such sophistication as Takemitsu's, especially in his more 'experimental' period, is a feature whose unexpectedness has not gone unremarked by Takemitsu scholars; as Dana Richard Wilson has remarked, 'Because so many aspects of Takemitsu's musical fabrics are unconventional, it is surprising when the obvious device of canon is incorporated.'<sup>300</sup> Yet if, as has already been observed, Takemitsu could perceive no incongruity in the intrusion of the musical commonplace into the harmonic choices of his advanced compositional idiom, it should perhaps be no more surprising that his selection of contrapuntal techniques should occasionally exhibit the same unabashed preference for the everyday.

The uses to which Takemitsu put this simple compositional technique can perhaps be divided into two categories. In certain situations, particularly in works for large forces, canonic imitation by several voices is used primarily as a device to build up tightly-woven, richly chromatic instrumental textures, rather than a polyphony of clearly audible individual contrapuntal lines. In these instances, individual instrumental voices may not be perceptible at all, or perceptible only momentarily as the vicissitudes of performance and of the listener's attention bring them into focus and out again. In *Autumn*, for instance, the passage in which 'the strings are divided into a swirling mass of carefully organised canons and pc-set "progressions" beginning at letter A in the score'<sup>301</sup> makes effective use of such 'microcanonic' procedures to organise the nineteen individual string lines: there is a four-voice canon at the unison for the violins, another two-part canon for the violas, as well as four *ostinati* of rotating cycles of pitches of the kind to which more attention will be given later.<sup>302</sup> The example below from *Green* (Ex. 99) represents an even more extreme departure from the traditional, clear-cut presentation of *dux* and *comes* of conventional canonic technique. Here a twelve-part 'endless' canon is introduced *in medias res*; lacking as it does the traditional imitative entries, and consisting in any case of featureless, microtonal 'slitherings', the canon is hardly likely to be perceived as such by the listener. Rather, it operates more as

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<sup>300</sup> Wilson, op. cit., p. 152

<sup>301</sup> Smaldone, op. cit., p. 224

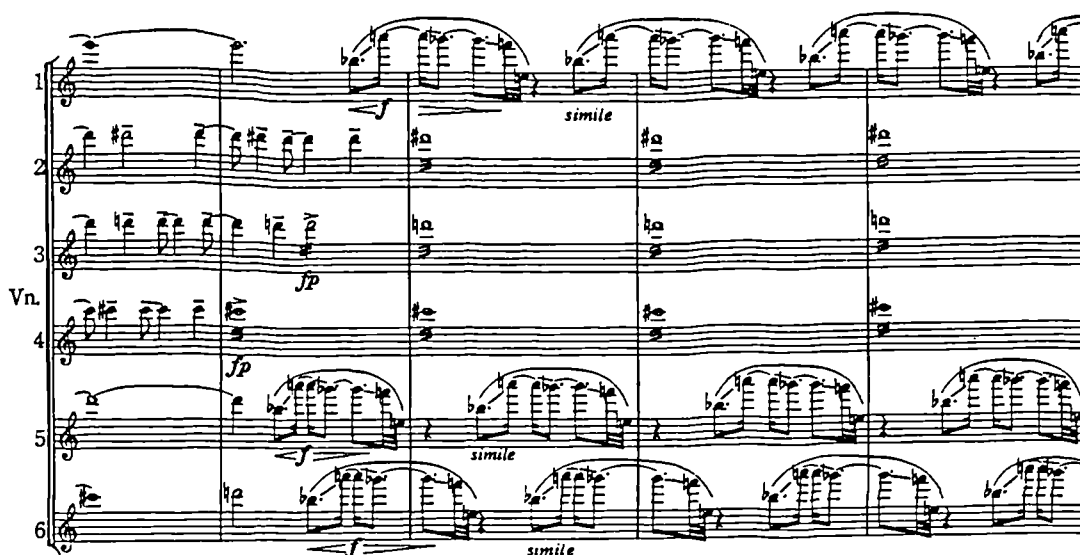
<sup>302</sup> See below, Section 4.2

a notational device, to ensure constant movement on the one hand, coupled with complete vertical presentation of the saturated microtonal harmony at any given moment on the other.

Ex. 99: *Green*, fig. 8, b. 2

This kind of almost imperceptible use of canonic writing for purely textural ends is especially characteristic of the dense sound-masses of the composer's 'second period.' Elsewhere in these works, however, one finds examples of a second category of canonic usage in Takemitsu's work: of canon in its rather more orthodox form of clearly presented successive imitations of one voice by another, as in the extract from *The Dorian Horizon* quoted below (Ex. 100), with its strangely nocturnal, 'Bartókian' overtones.

As this example shows, Takemitsu's use of the device in this manner is usually relatively straightforward and uncomplicated, and devoid of the displays of academic artifice conventionally associated with canonic technique in the West. An example of one of the rather rare instances of canonic writing in Takemitsu's music which does display a more erudite approach is that quoted below in Ex. 101a from *Coral Island*. Here the second violin part is a canon by inversion of the first, beginning a minor fourteenth lower, and with the last two demi-semiquavers raised by a semitone; while the viola offers a *retrograde* inversion of the first violin part,



Ex. 100: *The Dorian Horizon*, bb. 130-134

with the figure  $x^2$  of the former equivalent to  $x^1$  of the latter. If this viola part is reversed and transposed to the same pitch as that of the first violin, and the two overlapping segments spliced together, one arrives at the 'panchromatic' sequence of pitches shown in Ex. 101b.

Of these two forms of canonic writing used by Takemitsu – the use of dense accumulations of individual lines, or of series of chords, to build up complex textures on the one hand, the audible imitation of clearly differentiated contrapuntal voices on the other – the latter is of course the more frequently encountered in the simplified musical idiom of the composer's later years. Like the example from *Green* above, Ex. 102 from *Rocking Mirror Daybreak* omits the traditional 'narrative' preamble of *comes* following *dux*, preferring instead to offer the canonic process as a *fait accompli*; but the effect of its lucid two-part counterpart could hardly be further removed from that of the earlier example.

Examples of equally clear imitative writing are to be found in numerous other 'third period' scores. In *I Hear the Water Dreaming*, the notion of canonic imitation is even associated with one of themes as a kind of intrinsic 'feature', five of its seven appearances taking the form of the kind of two-part canonic exposition shown in Ex. 103.

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

$x^1$

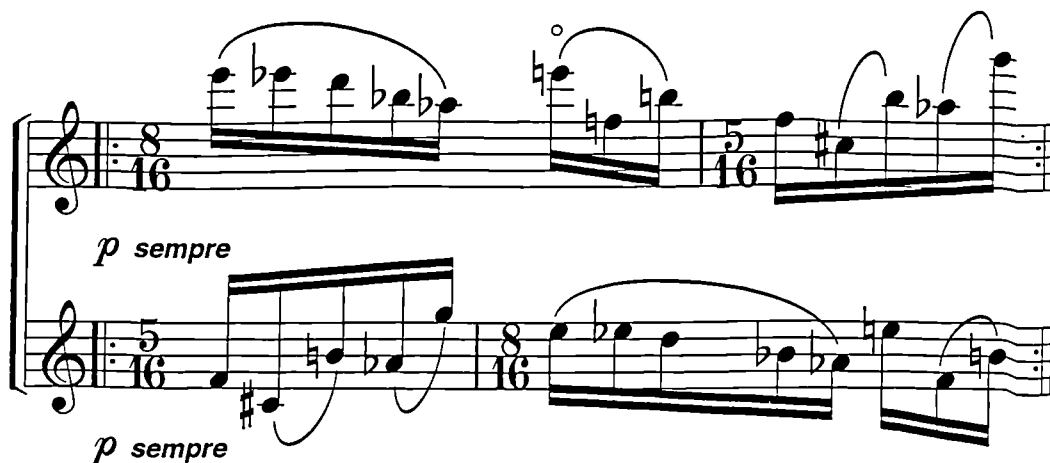
$x^2$

Ex. 101a: *Coral Island*, p. 26, b. 3

Ex. 101b: Series of pitches implied by above

### 3.2.2 Conclusions

Instances of the use of canonic imitation are so widely dispersed throughout Western music of all periods since the Middle Ages that it would seem at first sight rather futile to look for specific models for Takemitsu's adoption of the device. Only in the case of his rather specialised adaptation of canonic technique as a means of generating complex 'webs' of polyphony can one suggest specific parallels with Western composers – in this instance, most obviously with the 'micropolyphony' of Ligeti, the *Kyrie* of whose *Requiem*, for example, builds up its impenetrable



Ex. 102: *Rocking Mirror Daybreak II*, bb. 34-35

Ex. 103: *I Hear the Water Dreaming*, letter L, b. 4

chromatic textures from the accumulation of microscopic canonic processes<sup>303</sup>. Yet,

<sup>303</sup> Ligeti's model, in turn, is of course Bartók, a debt which he acknowledges in the said *Kyrie* movement, where the starting pitches of successive canonic entries project a pattern of two chromatic scales, alternately ascending and descending from the initial B $\flat$  – just as the starting pitches of the fugal entries in the first movement of the *Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta* project a pattern of two cycles of fifths, alternately ascending and descending from the initial A $\natural$



while it is difficult to single out one possible source of influence for Takemitsu's use of canonic techniques in general from the legion candidates in the Western tradition, it is possible to point to one contender that is not Western at all, that comes in fact from a tradition very close to Takemitsu's own cultural background. Shigeo Kishibe has coined a delightful neologism for this particular canonic process, which occurs in one of the most sophisticated forms of traditional Japanese music:

‘For the entrance and exit of the Gagaku dancers, a specific music named Chōshi is played. The first Shō player performs a melody which is followed by the second, the second by the third, and so on. This is not in the strict style of a canon, but based on an elastic discrepancy. While this shō ensemble is going on, the oboes, which are played in the same style, join the Shō. Then the flutes enter in the same way. The whole ensemble produces a kind of chaos. No one can classify this “chaotic” sound as either harmony, polyphony or heterophony. The author proposes to name it chaophony.’<sup>304</sup>

It is clear that Takemitsu was well aware of this traditional practice, for he introduces a suitably ‘chaophonous’ passage into his own composition for *gagaku* ensemble, *In an Autumn Garden* (1973). At letter F of this work, three pairs of woodwind instruments enter in turn, playing in inexact double canon material which, with its *ostinato*-like repeated figures and idiomatic ‘bendings’ of pitch, affords a remarkable comparison with the ‘night music’ of Ex. 100. Since, by the time of the latter’s composition, Takemitsu had already become interested in Japanese traditional music, is it not perhaps more than likely that certain kinds of canonic texture in his music owe their inspiration not primarily to the long history of the West’s involvement with the technique, but rather to this source in his own indigenous musical culture?

### 3.3 Thematic ideas

While the majority of the technical devices so far discussed have been shown to be fairly constant preoccupations of the composer throughout his career, his manner of handling thematic materials, by contrast, underwent modifications as his stylistic language developed. By and large, recognisably thematic forms assume

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<sup>304</sup> Kishibe, *op. cit.*, p. 27

greater importance at the outer ends of his composing career – the ‘middle period’, with its emphasis on dense ‘cluster’ formations, ‘pointillistic’ textures and angular instrumental lines involving a rapid turnover of pitches, affording much less in the way of recognisably ‘thematic’ shapes than either the juvenile works or the simplified products of the composer’s later manner. Furthermore, while a preoccupation with *melos* is a consistent feature of both the early and late phases of Takemitsu’s career, many of the works from the composer’s ‘third period’ especially are characterised by reiterated emphasis on a number of terse, epigrammatic motivic ideas – recalling Dana Richard Wilson’s comment (already referred to) that they are ‘motivically tighter’<sup>305</sup>. Of course, the above generalised comparisons refer only to changes of emphasis, rather than absolute revisions of procedure. Even such an apogee of ‘second period’ experimentation as *Arc*, for example, contains a langorous, recurrent idea which Funayama has referred to as ‘the *Leitmotiv* of *Arc*, what should perhaps be called its principal theme, a Romantic melody’<sup>306</sup>; and, as the discussions below will indicate, both brief, aphoristic ideas and extended melodic statements can be found in every phase of the composer’s career. Nevertheless, in general terms the above rough distinction holds more or less true; and, with this in mind, attention will first be turned to the most consistent element of The Thematic Process in Takemitsu, his preference for extended melodic ideas.

### 3.3.1 Extended melodic ideas

‘I probably belong to a type of composer of songs who keeps thinking about melody; I am old fashioned’, Takemitsu observed at one point<sup>307</sup>, while according to another source, the composer was wont to sing his musical ideas in the process of creating them.<sup>308</sup> Statements such as these testify to the importance of *melos* to Takemitsu’s musical thinking, an emphasis also borne out explicitly by the titles of some of his works: *Air* for solo flute (1995), for instance, his last completed composition, whose title refers not to ‘breathing’ but to the English equivalent of *aria*; or *Uta* (‘Songs’) for mixed chorus (1979-92). As well as expressing itself

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<sup>305</sup> Wilson, op. cit., p. 256

<sup>306</sup> Funayama, ‘Takemitsu Tōru Kenkyū Nōto 6’, p. 68

<sup>307</sup> ‘Ki no Kagami, Sogen no Kagami’, p. 30. English version quoted from Takemitsu, transl. Adachi and Reynolds, op. cit., p. 63

<sup>308</sup> Sukeyasu Shiba, interviewed by Susumu Shōno in: ‘The rôle of listening in *Gagaku*’, *Contemporary Music Review* I (1987), p. 23

in the form of often quite extended melodic lines in the composer's work, this emphasis on *melos* also informs Takemitsu's preference for textures such as melody-and-accompaniment or chorale-like homophony, in which the uppermost, melodic voice has a privileged status. The early *Requiem for Strings* provides a good example of the composer's predilection for materials of this kind: much of the work is given over to long, unison *cantilena* phrases in the higher instruments of an intensely expressive character, with the remaining instruments assigned to providing subordinate harmonic support. The large-scale construction of this *melos* is also typical, with the ends of phrases clearly articulated by means of silences or *morendo* endings, and parallelisms of melodic contour between the phrases – the second phrase, in bar 4, for instance, beginning as a transposed variant of the first a tone higher. As the movement progresses, in fact, much of this melodic material proves to have a structural, thematic significance, appearing over and over again in the course of the work, albeit with minor, apparently arbitrary variations. Ex. 104 shows the various forms assumed by the material designated by the letter 'A' in Fig. 1<sup>309</sup> during the course of this work. It will be observed that these fall into two types, each of them repeated more or less consistently in its appropriate context, and related to the other in various ways, particularly in terms of the three-note *incipit* figure, which differs only in the substitution of a minor for a major second between the first two pitches.

On occasion, expansive melodic materials of this kind prove in themselves to be constructed out of a number of smaller, motivic ideas, revealing the workings of a considerable compositional rigour in this respect. In Exx. 105 and 106, the pitches of the first and eighth phrases of the violin melody from Takemitsu's early *Distance de Fée* have been presented in such a manner as to make an example of this process clearly comprehensible. Here the melody is intended to be read from left to right, and continuously from one stave to the next; the vertical partitions show how all of this continuously unfolding *melos* can be divided into three principal motivic types *A*, *B* and *C*, with the exception of two pitches in the first phrase labelled *X* which do not fit into the scheme. The repeated pitches here, such as the Eb's and G's in the second stave of Ex. 105, do not correspond to pitch repetitions in the score, but rather indicate an important technique whereby Takemitsu overcomes

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<sup>309</sup> See Section 2.1

Ex. 104: Variants of 'A' material in *Requiem for Strings*

and disguises the inherent, potentially 'fragmentary' nature of this constructional method: namely, the use of certain pitches as pivots, common to the end of one motivic unit and the beginning of the next. This kind of concatenation may, in its turn, generate higher-level motivic units which can reappear as melodic features: the combination of notes 2-4 of *A* with notes 2-4 of *B*, for instance, which appears in staves 5-6 of Ex. 105, produces one such distinctive melodic turn of this kind. And in the phrase quoted in Ex. 106, the use of 'pivot' pitches enables the composer to rework part of his material in an almost 'developmental' fashion. This eighth phrase of the melody begins as a transposition, down an octave, of notes 2-4 of the second stave in Ex. 105; however, by using the last of these pitches as a pivot to notes 2-4 of motive *B*, in the manner of the standard formula alluded to above, rather than to notes 1-4 of *B* as previously, Takemitsu raises the final pitch of

motive *B* from G $\sharp$  to A $\sharp$ . He then proceeds, as on the previous occasion, to use this final pitch of *B* as the first note of a statement of *C*, the final note of which is, in its turn, treated as the first note of a further statement of *C* a minor third higher; but here Takemitsu expands on his model, using the final of this second statement in turn as the starting point for yet another statement of the *C* motive, a minor third higher still. The descending major second pair (A $\flat$ -G $\flat$ ) at the end of this motive, in turn, is pivotal to a restatement of notes 2-4 of *A*; the A $\sharp$  at the end of the latter, an octave higher, begins a descent through notes 2-4 of *B* (the 'standard formula' again); and the final pair of the latter is also the first pair of pitches of a restatement of notes 2-4 of *A*. Thus, starting from the same material as the first phrase, and using the same techniques of construction, Takemitsu is able to develop from it a wholly different melodic shape, which nevertheless audibly shares several features in common with it.

Such a method of melodic construction was by no means unique in Takemitsu's output. *Paths* for solo trumpet, for instance, written forty-three years later in 1994, also weaves extended melodic lines out of a number of shorter generative cells, and at one point echoes one of the techniques described above in *Distance de Fée* very closely, using overlapping statements of two motivic forms to generate a series of 'sequential' statements, each a minor third higher than the one previous to it (Ex. 107)<sup>310</sup>.



Ex. 107: *Paths* for solo trumpet, p. 6, system 4

<sup>310</sup> Miyuki Shiraishi also comments on the thematic construction in *Paths*, observing that the principal theme consists of five segments, of which the second is a variant, the fifth an 'echo' of the first (op. cit., p. 49)

The musical score for Ex. 105 is presented on six staves, organized into three pairs. Above the staves, the letters A, B, C, and X are positioned to denote specific measures or segments of the music. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and accidentals (flats and sharps). The first staff (top) begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The subsequent staves continue the melodic construction, with some staves showing multiple measures of music. The overall structure suggests a complex, multi-measure phrase.

Ex. 105: *Distance de Fée*; motivic construction of first phrase of melody

A different but related method of constructing an extended melody out of a number of smaller musical ideas is illustrated by Ex. 108, from the orchestral work *Dreamtime* (1981). Like the examples quoted above, this also admits of segmentation into a number of generative cells, but here these do not consist of ‘motives’ in the sense of a consistent ordering of intervals, but rather of various unordered projections of the same pitch-class set, [0,1,4]. Viewed simply in terms of its pitch-class content, the melody may in fact be viewed as a ‘sequence’ of one phrase followed by its own transposition a perfect fifth higher; and while the

A
B
C

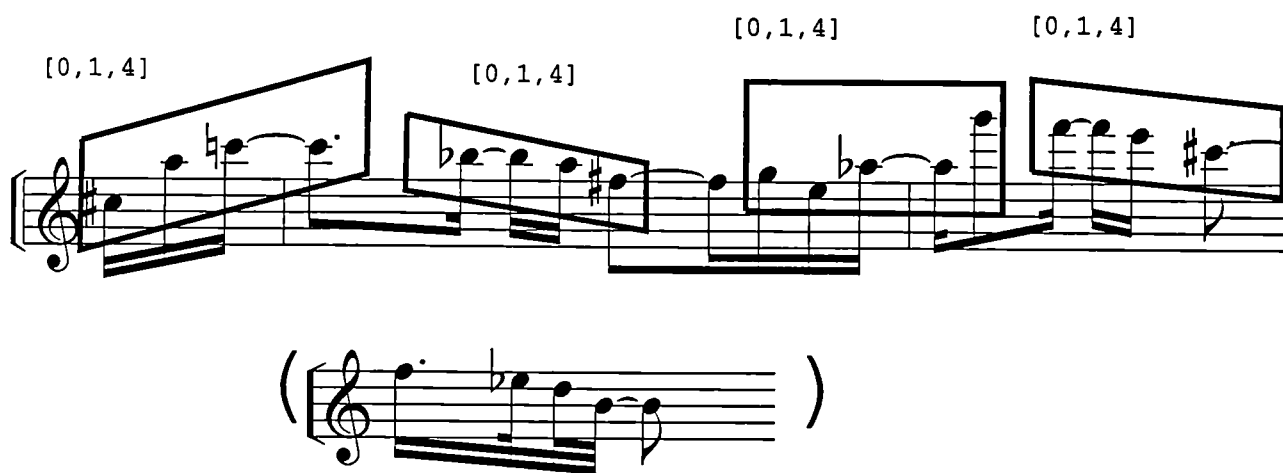
The musical score consists of eight staves, grouped into four pairs. The notation is as follows:

- Section A (Measures 1-2):**
  - Staff 1: Quarter notes G4, A4, B4, C5.
  - Staff 4: Quarter notes B3, A3, G3.
  - Staff 5: Quarter notes F#3, F#3, G3.
  - Staff 8: Quarter notes G3, A3, B3, C4.
- Section B (Measures 3-4):**
  - Staff 4: Quarter notes G4, A4, B4.
  - Staff 5: Quarter notes F#3, G#3, A#3.
- Section C (Measures 5-6):**
  - Staff 1: Quarter notes G4, A4, B4.
  - Staff 2: Quarter notes G4, A4, B4.
  - Staff 3: Quarter notes G4, A4, B4.
  - Staff 8: Quarter notes G3, A3, B3, C4.

Ex. 106 *Ibid.*; motivic construction of eighth phrase

ordering of the pitches within the first and third constituent cells to a certain extent militates against recognition of this fact, the presence of the same ordering of pitches in the second and fourth cells at the same time underlines it. And the perception of a connection between these last two units is further aided by the fact that these particular orderings of the [0,1,4] collection, taken in conjunction

with the final pitches of the sets preceding them, yield a four-note motive which is a recognisable recurrent feature of the work in question (shown in brackets in the example). Perhaps it is the kind of construction shown in this example to which Akimichi Takeda is referring in his description of this work, when he remarks that ‘sounds call out to sounds, motives call out to melodies.’<sup>311</sup> The [0,1,4] collection used here in fact appears in several of the work’s constituent motives, and also occurs vertically, forming the kind of link between horizontal and vertical presentations of material which will be discussed in greater detail below.<sup>312</sup> And this whole process whereby the theme is woven out of the basic three-note collection recalls an observation made by Timothy Koozin with regard to *Piano Distance*, in which work what Koozin refers to as ‘primary trichords’ are combined to produce longer linear segments – a process which Koozin sees as exactly analogous to the additive process whereby Takemitsu’s vertical forms are built up from the superposition of such elements.<sup>313</sup>



Ex. 108: *Dreamtime*, letter H, b. 4

<sup>311</sup> Quoted by Akiyama in Takemitsu’s ‘Ongaku o yobimasu mono’, p. 177

<sup>312</sup> See Section 3.3.4. Smaldone has commented on the prevalence of [0,1,3] and [0,1,4] sets in *November Steps* in his article on that work (Smaldone, op. cit., pp. 219-221)

<sup>313</sup> Koozin (1988), p. 128



### 3.3.2 Motivic writing

Although the interplay of terse, epigrammatic ideas is, as noted above, especially characteristic of the composer's later manner, the practice is nevertheless by no means wholly absent from his earlier scores. One example of emphasis on such a thematic feature, for instance, is afforded by the composer's *Masque* for two flutes, written in 1959. This work is in part written in accordance with a kind of serial method, to which more detailed attention will be given in its place<sup>314</sup>; for the present, reference to this aspect of the compositional process will be limited to drawing attention to a four-note motive which appears for the first time in the first flute part of movement I, bar 2<sup>315</sup>, and which is heard again in the second flute in bar 7, where it reveals its origin as a part of a reordering of the second hexachord of the work's fundamental series. When the opening bars of this first flute part are repeated a semitone lower (bb. 23-24, Ex. 109), the pitches corresponding to this little motive are reversed, giving rise to a new form which is itself repeated in b. 34 (Ex. 110).

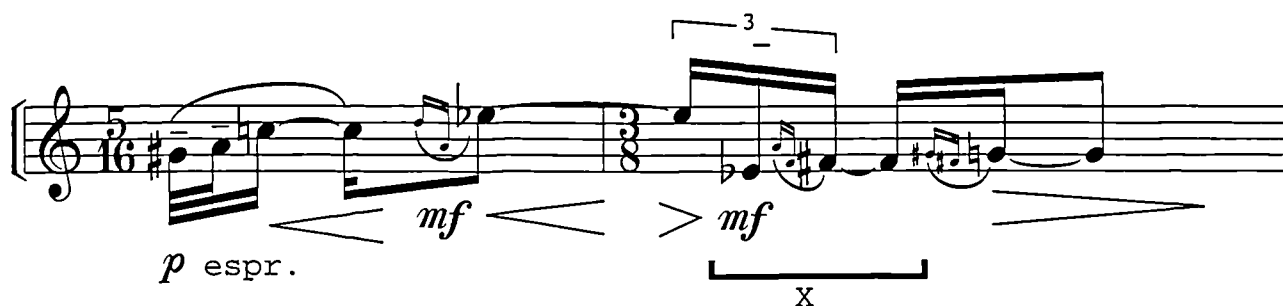


Ex. 109: *Masque* for two flutes, first movement, bb. 23-24 (first flute)

The original version of *Masque* is in two movements, *Continu* and *Incidental*, the second of which is in many ways of quite different character than the first, and constructed from completely independent musical materials. A couple of fleeting references to the motive referred to above as *x* in the second movement – in bar 1 (Ex. 111), and in retrograde in bar 9 (Ex. 112, repeated in bar 34) – are therefore of crucial importance in forging a link between what would otherwise appear to

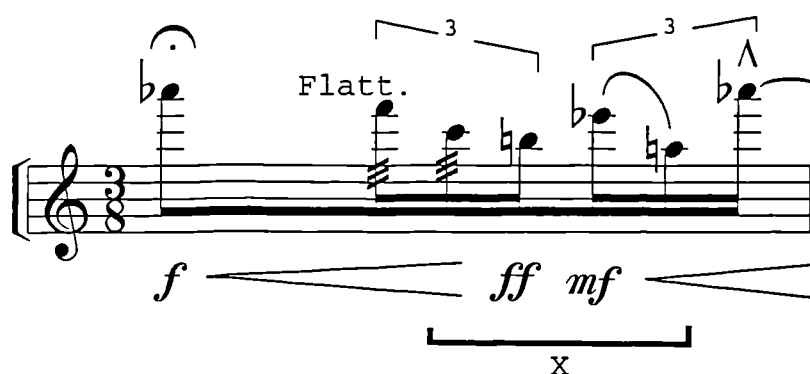
<sup>314</sup> See below, Section 3.4

<sup>315</sup> Labelled *x* in the reduction of this section quoted below (Ex. 142)

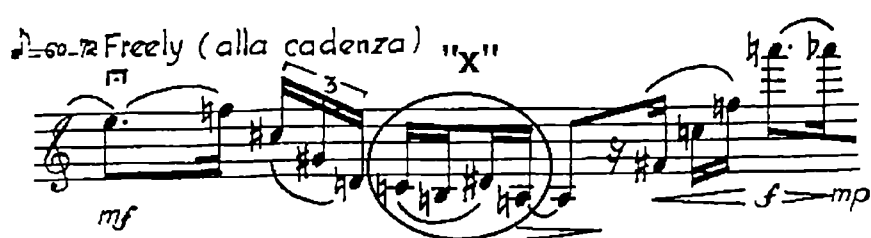


Ex. 110: *Ibid.*, bb. 33-34

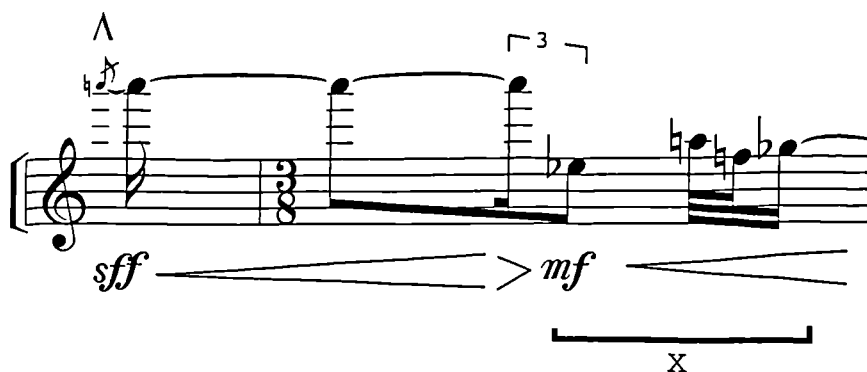
be quite independently conceived, self-sufficient musical structures. (This same four-note motive also appears briefly in Takemitsu's 'mid-period' work for violin and piano *Hika* (1966), as Ex. 113 illustrates.)



Ex. 111: *Masque*, second movement, b. 1, first flute



Ex. 113: *Hika* for violin and piano, p. 3, system 4



Ex. 112: *Masque*, second movement, b. 9, first flute

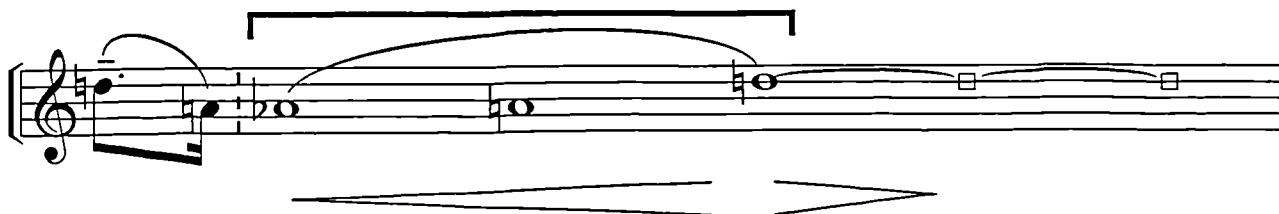
However, as observed above, it is in the later phase of Takemitsu's compositional career that the use of a number of aphoristic motivic ideas in each work becomes more or less a standard compositional device. Some pieces indeed are to a large measure preoccupied wholly with the interweaving of a number of such thematic types – this is particularly true of *A Way A Lone* for string quartet (1981), in which the 'seriousness' traditionally associated with that particular medium appears to have suggested to the composer a more rigourously motivic and contrapuntal style than that with which he is usually associated. Certain of these motivic ideas reappear in more than one work; and, of such recurrent motives, none is more prevalent than that consisting of the interval of a semitone followed by that of a perfect fourth in the same direction. This is Takemitsu's 'S-E-A' motive, so called because it may be derived from the three pitches associated with those letter-names in German nomenclature:

'Why did I choose those pitches? I wanted to plan a tonal "sea." Here the "sea" is Eb [*Es* in German nomenclature]-E-A, a 3-note motive consisting of a half-step and a perfect fourth.'<sup>316</sup>

However, while the above was written with regard to the 1980 work *Far Calls. Coming, Far!* (1980), Takemitsu was already using the same motivic shape many years earlier, even if not always at this precise pitch. The earliest appearance of the motive known to the present writer in fact occurs in the composer's 1974 work for brass ensemble, *Garden Rain*, where it is first stated as Ab-A $\flat$ -D; in the

<sup>316</sup> Takemitsu, transl. Kakudo and Glasow, op. cit., p. 112

version quoted in Ex. 114, a statement of this version is preceded by, and overlaps with, its own retrograde:



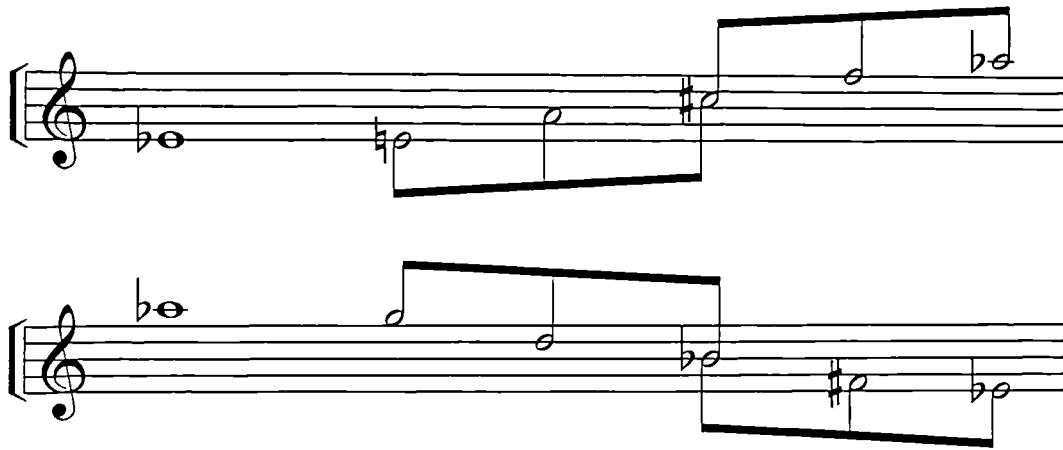
Ex. 114: *Garden Rain*, p. 7

In the works of succeeding years, Takemitsu was to make innumerable references to this three-note motive – particularly, of course, in those works whose titles contain some sort of aquatic reference, and to which he collectively referred as ‘Waterscape’. A selection of illustrations of these ubiquitous occurrences is given in Ex. 116, spanning a period of twenty years in the composer’s output, from the *Folios* for solo guitar of 1974, to *Paths* for solo trumpet of 1994. The example from *Far Calls. Coming, Far!* illustrates how, in that work, the initial 3-note cell was expanded, ‘extended upward from A with two major thirds and one minor third’<sup>317</sup>, generating a six-note pattern which Takemitsu used both in its prime form and inversion, as shown in Ex. 115.

The idea evidently appealed to the composer, for the variants of the S-E-A motive from both *Dreamtime* and *Paths* quoted in Ex. 116 make use of the same device of upward extension, and, transposed, map onto part of the ascending form quoted in Ex. 115 exactly. The composer’s own pronouncements on the matter suggest that the interest this device held for him lay in the tonal implications of these piled-up thirds, for he noted that

‘...the A major and D $\flat$  major triads in the ascending pattern have a very bright sound when compared to the darker inversion, which, descending from A $\flat$ , had two minor triads, G-D-B $\flat$  and B $\flat$ -G $\flat$ -E $\flat$ . Using these patterns I set

<sup>317</sup> Ibid.



Ex. 115: 6-note idea and inversion, *Far Calls. Coming, Far!* (after Ohtake)

the “sea of tonality” from which many pantonal chords flow. Into that sea of vibrations pours the solo violin.<sup>318</sup>

But perhaps what springs most readily to the mind of the Western listener when confronted with this theme is neither of the above qualities, but rather the visual and aural resemblance of this idea to the principal material of a twentieth-century classic of the violin and orchestra repertoire, to which more attention will be given in due course.<sup>319</sup>

Incidentally, Takemitsu’s use of the device of translating words in Roman script into their equivalent musical letter names was not confined to this ‘S-E-A’ motive alone. There are at least two other instances of such derivations in the composer’s music: in *Bryce* (1976), whose source word is the work’s title, which yields Bb-C-E (again using the German letter names); and in *Star Isle* for orchestra (1982), which was commissioned for the centenary of Waseda University, and uses the latter name to derive its principal motto, Ab (i.e. ‘As’)-E-D-A.

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<sup>318</sup> Ibid.

<sup>319</sup> See below, Section 3.3.5



(i) Folios, for solo guitar (1974)



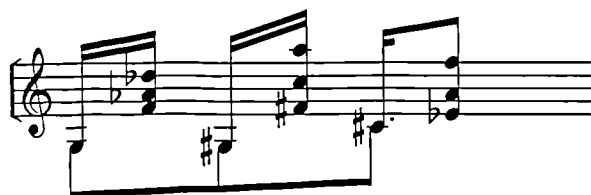
(ii) Quatrain (1975), D/4 (fl.)



(iii) A Flock Descends into the Pentagonal Garden (1977), H/2 - 3 (vln. 1)



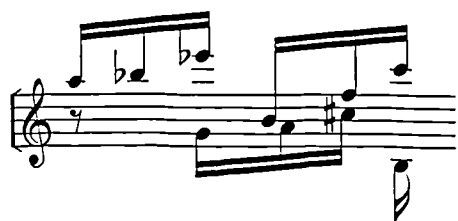
(iv) Far Calls. Coming, Far! (1980), O/8 (solo vln.)



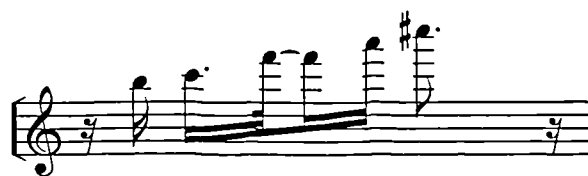
(v) Toward the Sea (1980), p. 11 system 1 (guitar)



(vi) A Way a Lone (1981), b. 120 (vln. 1)



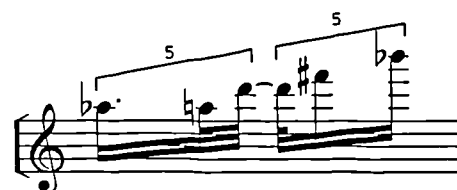
(vii) Rain Tree (1981), p. 12 b.1 (vibr.)



(viii) Dreamtime (1981), B/7 (vln. 1+2)



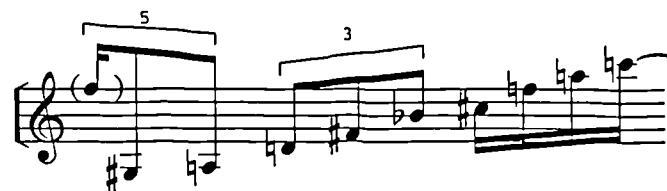
(ix) Rain Tree Sketch (1982, solo pno.),  
b. 24



(x) Rain Coming (1982), D/5 (vln. 1)



(xi) I Hear the Water Dreaming (1987), K/4 (solo fl.)



(xii) Paths (solo trumpet, 1994), p. 4,  
system 6

### Ex. 116: Versions of 'S-E-A' motive

### 3.3.3 Degrees of plasticity in thematic materials

Alongside the imaginary spectrum of thematic types implied by the previous two sub-sections, ranging from aphoristic ‘tag’ on the one hand, to fully-fledged melody on the other, it is perhaps possible to rank Takemitsu’s thematic ideas according to a second hierarchical distribution, whose ordering principle would be the degree of mutability of each thematic type as it undergoes repetition in the course of the piece. By way of analogy with the terminology adopted earlier with regard to the composer’s harmonic practice, the thematic types occurring at one extreme end of such a spectrum – those that are subjected only to minimum variation, or none at all – might then be referred to as ‘*iconic*’ themes; and one might reasonably expect such themes, like their harmonic counterparts, to serve as points of repose in the general flux of events, and function as landmarks to orient the listener by signalling important points in the overall architectural design. Timothy Koozin in fact suggests a very similar idea to this in his analysis of *Piano Distance*, claiming that in this work ‘the repetition of more memorable events is spanned by passages of relative ambiguity or quietude’<sup>320</sup>, and that

‘In order for this kind of musical structure to be apprehended, event recurrences spanning larger intervals of time must be clearly differentiated from less emphasised, less memorable intervening materials.’<sup>321</sup>

Koozin goes on to observe that the ‘isolated, recurring events’ in such a scheme are ‘sometimes invariant in regard to pitch and register’<sup>322</sup>, and, with particular reference to the second movement of *Pause Ininterrompue*, refers to such isolated ideas as ‘“frozen” gestures.’<sup>323</sup> Admittedly, the categories of event which Koozin subsumes under this heading – isolated chords, appearances of particular pitch-classes in fixed registers – do not entirely correspond to the more emphatically ‘thematic’ presentations which will be discussed below; but the essential pattern described by him, of ‘frozen’ gestures serving as landmarks in the midst of more fluid musical materials, corresponds to the use to which Takemitsu habitually puts his ‘iconic themes’ fairly precisely, as the discussion below will hopefully illustrate.

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<sup>320</sup> Koozin (1988), p. 64

<sup>321</sup> Ibid., p. 66

<sup>322</sup> Ibid., p. 67

<sup>323</sup> Ibid., p. 92

The above quotations from Koozin refer to the early (*Pause Ininterrompue*) and middle (*Piano Distance*) periods of the composer, and other Takemitsu commentators have noted the presence of a similar intransigence of thematic materials in works of these periods. Gibson, for instance, draws attention to one theme in *Requiem for Strings* which ‘remains basically unchanged’<sup>324</sup> in contrast to the Protean transformations of the other materials in that work, and Ogawa says, rather sweepingly, of *Wind Horse* that ‘motives are never developed in any of the five pieces. Once themes are introduced, they are kept throughout the music as they are first stated.’<sup>325</sup> However, despite these examples from earlier pieces, the typical, statuesque gesture of the ‘iconic theme’ with which the present discussion is concerned is more commonly to be found in the richly thematic works of the composer’s later manner, and it is therefore from works of this period that the examples here have been drawn. The 1989 work *A String around Autumn*, for instance, provides examples encompassing the whole gamut of thematic plasticity, including at one extreme such materials as the four-note motto quoted in Ex. 117, whose transformation is limited to transposition by a semitone, and a slight change of rhythmic outline.



Ex. 117: *A String around Autumn*, letter G, b. 7

This example of an ‘iconic’ motto also illustrates the fashion in which such immutable thematic ideas might function as landmarks in the formal scheme, for its appearances coincide with important junctures in the overall structure, for

<sup>324</sup> Gibson, op. cit., p. 118. The theme in question is the material heard for the first time in b. 10, categorised as ‘D’ in Fig. 1.

<sup>325</sup> Ogawa, op. cit., p. 125



which they serve as markers. Thus the first occurrence of the idea follows on immediately from a lengthy 'block' of material which will be repeated *verbatim* immediately before the coda, while the others appear just prior to the solo violist's cadenza. If such a motif occupies a position at the extreme lower end of the scale of plasticity, then closely following it, but ranking a little higher, comes the type of material of which Ex. 118 affords an example.

The musical score for Ex. 118, measures 1-2, is written for two staves in 4/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The top staff begins with a 'bouché cuivré' marking. The bottom staff begins with a 'pp' marking. Both staves have a crescendo hairpin leading to a 'poco mf' marking. The top staff then has a decrescendo hairpin leading to an 'sf pp' marking, followed by another 'bouché cuivré' marking. The bottom staff continues with the 'poco mf' and then the 'sf pp' marking.

Ex. 118: *Ibid.*, bb. 1-2

In four out of the six presentations of this progression which are offered during the course of the work, transformation of the material is limited to semitone transposition and slight rhythmic change, as in the previous instance, plus some changes of detail to the harmony. These may be described as the 'iconic' presentations of the material, occurring at structurally significant points in the work (such as the opening, quoted here), and significantly always followed by a 'consequent' comprised of an upward arpeggiation of an [0,1,4,5,8,9] (or '6-20') collection. This device, incidentally, of highlighting the fixed, immobile nature of certain thematic statements by linking them with an associated, secondary thematic idea is also found in other Takemitsu works; for example, in *A Way A Lone*, certain statements in inversion of the 'S-E-A' material, such as that shown in Ex. 119, are followed by a three-note idea comprising a falling minor sixth followed by rising semitone, which is heard in no other context, and always at the same pitch relative to its antecedent – giving a consistency as well as balance to these particular

thematic statements which foregrounds them as points of repose in the overall scheme.



Ex. 119: *A Way A Lone*, bb. 8-9

On the other hand, in addition to the four ‘iconic’ statements of Ex. 118, the two remaining citations of this formula are transposed into the treble register, so that as well as appearing in immutable, ‘iconic’ form, the material is also subject to some development of a limited kind. The distinction between these two instances and the other four statements is further emphasised in this case by the fact that the former have none of the structural significance of the latter, but such a distinction is not necessarily a consistent feature of Takemitsu’s practice. The opening ‘rocking’ idea of *Twill by Twilight* (1988), for instance, is subjected to various kinds of transformation during the course of the piece – expansion, contraction, transposition, etc.; and yet, for all that, it remains a sufficiently recognisable and consistent feature to function not merely as an occasional structural landmark, but as a regularly recurring theme, illustrating how readily the consistent use of such ‘iconic’ thematic materials may cross into the territory of the type of ‘ritornello’ form in Takemitsu’s music to which reference has already been made.<sup>326</sup>

Moving up the scale of plasticity from such intermittently flexible statements as this, one might place in the middle ground of the overall spectrum such materials as the principal melodic idea of *A String around Autumn*, which has already been quoted in Ex. 97 above.<sup>327</sup> The complete theme as shown here is subjected only to transposition during the course of its five reappearances, but its five-note *incipit* becomes the basis for an abundance of variants, some of them stretching

<sup>326</sup> See above, Section 2.4

<sup>327</sup> Section 3.1.7

the original to the limits of recognisability. And finally, at the extreme end of the spectrum of plasticity might be located such thematic types as those of which a selection from the same work is given in Ex. 120, whose relationship one to another is demonstrable only in the vague terms of common 'features' such as the use of some kind of upwardly-mobile 'pentatonic-referential' pitch-materials, and a tendency towards melodic constructions based on fourths and major seconds.<sup>328</sup> Such extremes of fluidity in the reinterpretation of the same essential thematic ingredients represent the very opposite pole from the immutable 'iconic' types with which the present discussion began.

The image displays six musical staves, each representing a different thematic type. The staves are arranged in two columns and three rows. Each staff has a label below it: C/1, F/4, Q/1, F/4, Q/4, and W/2. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and accidentals, with some staves featuring bracketed groups of notes and numbers (3, 6) indicating specific intervals or groupings.

Ex. 120: Loosely related thematic types, *A String around Autumn*

### 3.3.4 Relationships between thematic and harmonic pitch-content

Since Schoenberg's famous assertion that 'the two-or-more-dimensional space in which musical ideas are presented is a unit'<sup>329</sup>, if not for longer, the notion that

<sup>328</sup> Akimichi Takeda in fact describes the basis of the whole work as a 'five-note scale formed from three overlapping perfect fourths', E-F $\sharp$ -A-B-D (op. cit., p. 19)

<sup>329</sup> 'Style and Idea: selected writings of Arnold Schoenberg'; ed. by Leonard Stein, with translations by Leo Black (London: Faber, 1975), p. 220

a horizontal succession of pitches expressed as a thematic idea may be presented as a vertical aggregate, or harmonic idea, has been such an everyday feature of the vocabulary of contemporary music that it is something of a surprise to find that this is not a technique regularly favoured by Takemitsu. The six-note idea from *Far Calls. Coming, Far!* quoted in Section 3.3.2 for example<sup>330</sup>, with its cascades of successive thirds, might seem an obvious candidate for harmonic verticalisations yielding superimposed triadic forms, especially when the composer's own remarks about 'sea of tonality' triads are taken into consideration. Yet Takemitsu does not elect to treat the theme in this fashion; instead, it would appear that his compositional strategies here regard theme and harmony as separate categories, each operating according to its own rationale, and the six-note idea is consequently supported by an 'accompaniment' of unrelated harmonic materials. Such a conception of 'melody' and 'accompaniment' as independent strata each operating according to their own rules is of course quite typical of the composer, and has already been observed in other contexts.<sup>331</sup>

However, there are of course exceptions to this general rule. Takemitsu himself, in fact, speaking of the complex and artificial processes whereby he derived the harmonic materials for his *A Flock Descends into the Pentagonal Garden*, reveals that:

'...at the beginning, the oboes present the theme of the flock...This is also based on the same pitches [i.e. as the accompanying harmonic progression]'<sup>332</sup>

One of the most obvious examples of such a relationship between melodic and harmonic materials occurs when the thematic material in question is in itself simply an arpeggiation of a harmonic type, such as the upward flourish on the [0,1,4,5,8,9] collection to which reference has already been made in *A String Around Autumn*, or the pentatonic principal theme (Ex. 97) of the same work. The extended passages projecting a static vertical harmony in Takemitsu's works – the 'harmonic fields' described in Section 3.1.6 – could perhaps be considered an extreme example of this kind of derivation of horizontal events from an underlying harmonic structure.

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<sup>330</sup> Ex. 115

<sup>331</sup> See, for example, Section 2.2.5 above

<sup>332</sup> Takemitsu, transl. Kakudo and Glasow, op. cit., p. 105

Another very direct and simple kind of translation of a horizontal succession of events into a vertical sonority is the very literal device of actually sustaining those events after they are sounded in order to build up such a vertical sonority incrementally, in other words, by means of a kind of artificial, notational simulation of 'resonance' effects, as in Ex. 121.

Fl. sotto voce

pp

Fl. 1 sotto voce

pp

Ob. d'amore

poco

p

(p)

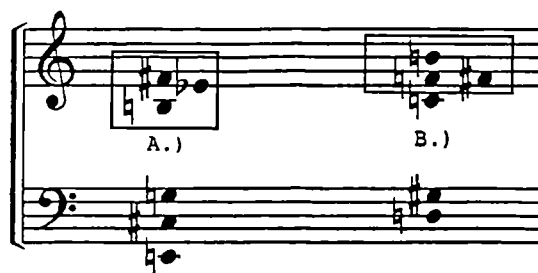
dim. smorz.

Ex. 121: *Orion* (orchestral version), p. 37, b. 3

The composer's partial adoption of serial method in certain scores, to which fuller attention will be paid shortly<sup>333</sup> is inevitably also responsible for the presentation of the same pitch materials in both verticalised and horizontal forms during the course of individual works, in the manner of 'classical' dodecaphonic practice. With the exception of the kinds of praxes already referred to, however, clear examples of such a relationship between the pitch-content of horizontal and vertical materials in non-serial contexts, although the very stuff of twentieth-century compositional method elsewhere, are rather rare in Takemitsu's own case. Gibson enumerates some examples of such a relationship between the melodic lines of *Requiem for Strings* and their accompanying harmonies, although the connections sometimes verge on the fanciful. For example, he asserts that each statement of the

<sup>333</sup> See below, Section 3.4

'A' material 'contains at least one vertical collection in which all the pitch classes of the horizontal melody are incorporated.'<sup>334</sup> In corroboration of this claim, he submits the instance of the second and sixth chords of the opening bars, both of which contain the sum pitch-content of the melodic line they accompany (shown as A<sup>1</sup> in Ex. 104) – although only when the lower pitches of these chords are omitted, and the melody note itself included as part of the collection, which reduces the number of other pitches that have to be found to three in each case (see Ex. 122, which shows the two harmonies in question. The notes enclosed in boxes are the three pitches which, in combination with the melody note, yield the sum pitch-content of the aforementioned thematic idea.)



**Ex. 122:** *Requiem for Strings*, opening, second and sixth chords of accompaniment

More extravagant devices even than this have to be pressed into service to justify Gibson's claim with respect to the remaining melodic materials, and the general impression left by his argument is one of only borderline credibility. A somewhat more convincing case for melodic-harmonic relationships of this sort is made by Koozin in his analysis of *Piano Distance*, in which work, he observes, all 'beamed gestures' contain a linear projection of an [0,1,4] trichord, and 'clearly isolate the [0,1,4] set, employing the pedal to project the [0,1,4] vertically as well as linearly'<sup>335</sup>; furthermore, primary segments forming the same [0,1,4] collection 'constitute a main melodic-thematic element in the piece'<sup>336</sup> It will be recalled that

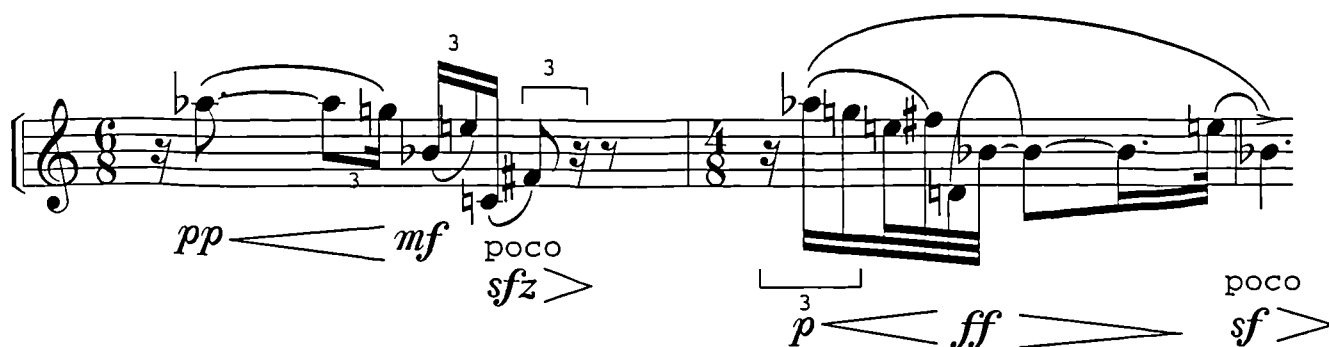
<sup>334</sup> Op. cit., p. 120

<sup>335</sup> Koozin (1988), p. 112. The gestures alluded to clearly form a kind of pianistic analogue to the 'resonance' effect alluded to above.

<sup>336</sup> Ibid.

precisely the same trichord formation was found to be the basis of a melodic line from *Dreamtime* quoted in an earlier section<sup>337</sup>, where it was also noted in passing that the [0,1,4] set plays an important rôle in the harmonic constructions of that work as well.

Apart from such instances, however, Takemitsu's music affords few other examples of clear, unambiguous relationships between the pitch-content of vertical and horizontal materials. It is perhaps surprising to find, therefore, that the 1987 work for flute and orchestra *I Hear the Water Dreaming* offers quite a rich selection of such horizontalised presentations of harmonic materials. The pitches contained in the flute passage quoted in Ex. 123, for instance, project a complete statement of the composer's favourite 'whole-tone+1' or '7-33' collection (whole-tone scale beginning on C, plus G $\sharp$ ), while those in the upper stave of Ex. 124 project another transposition of the same set (whole-tone scale on C $\sharp$  plus A $\flat$ ), with the further interesting feature that the accompanying harmony, shown on the lower stave, is formed from an extrapolation of pitches from the melodic line, and thus constitutes a subset ([0,1,2,4,8]). Another subset of the 7-33 collection, [0,2,3,6,8] $\bar{1}$ , is consistently projected by the *incipit* of the recurring principal theme of the work (Ex. 125).



Ex. 123: *I Hear the Water Dreaming*, letter C, bb. 1-2

A further rare instance of such 'implied harmony' in horizontal writing is to be found in the late work for solo trumpet *Paths, in memoriam Witold Lutosławski*

<sup>337</sup> See section 3.3.1, Ex. 108

[0, 1, 2, 4, 6, 8, 10]

Fl. solo

mf < f p mf f 3

W.w., hrns., perc. pp sempre

[0, 1, 2, 4, 8]

Ex. 124: Ibid., letter N, b. 7

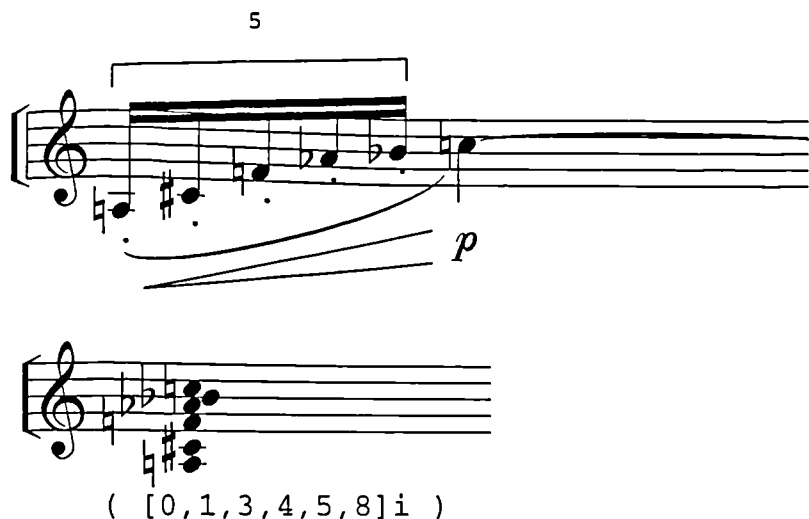
[0, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8] i

pp mf mf 3

Ex. 125: Ibid., b. 4ff

(1994). Here the harmony implied by one of various short motives out of which the melodic strand is woven proves to be identical with one of the standard, 'iconic' harmonic types to be found over and over again in a work from nearly thirty years previously, *Green* for orchestra: [0,1,3,4,5,8]i (Ex. 126).





Ex. 126: *Paths* for solo trumpet, p. 4, system 3

### 3.3.5 Conclusions

The approach offered in the following discussion does not correspond exactly to that adopted in the three previous sub-sections bearing this title. Whereas the latter were preoccupied with suggesting possible origins for various technical devices of Takemitsu's *per se*, the objective of the present enquiry – with the exception of the concluding paragraph – is not to undertake a parallel investigation into the sources of Takemitsu's thematic method as such, but rather, to suggest likely candidates for the derivation of some of Takemitsu's thematic ideas themselves.

Takemitsu himself repeatedly acknowledged his indebtedness to the music of Debussy; and, as far as thematic resemblances go, there is certainly some kinship between a type of expansive, melismatic theme encountered particularly in Takemitsu's later music<sup>338</sup> and – ironically enough – the kind of 'Arabesque' or 'Oriental' melos to be found in some of the French composer's scores.<sup>339</sup> However, despite Takemitsu's insistence on his music's Debussyan pedigree, the French composer whose name springs to mind for most Western listeners when exposed

<sup>338</sup> E.g. at fig. D of *Pleiades*; fig. C of *Vers, l'Arc-en-Ciel, Palma*; or fig. L of *To the Edge of Dream*.

<sup>339</sup> Takeda has also suggested a relationship between the principal idea of *Fantasma/Cantos*, with its repeated descending augmented fourths, and the main theme of the *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*, which of course descends chromatically through the same interval (op. cit., p. 18)

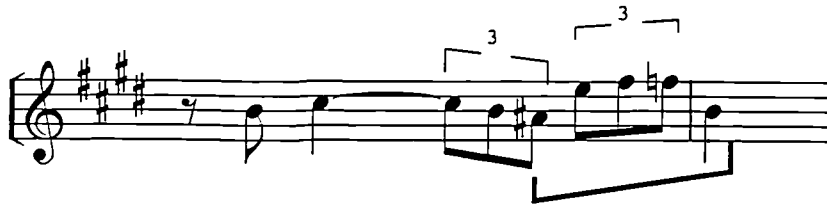
to Takemitsu's work is much more likely to be Olivier Messiaen, and it might therefore not be unreasonable to suppose that this persuasive influence left some mark on Takemitsu's melodic practice, as it so palpably did in other areas of his musical technique. There are several examples to suggest that this might indeed have proved to be the case. For instance, mention has already been made of the fact that Messiaen's *Technique de mon langage musical* was available in Japanese translation as early as 1954, and one can be certain that Takemitsu was very familiar with its contents since, as we have seen, he listed it alongside the *magnum opus* of George Russell as one of the finest music books of the century.<sup>340</sup> In this treatise, Messiaen describes a number of stock melodic patterns used in his work, one of which – example 94 in the appendix of music illustrations – is shown in Ex. 127 below. Messiaen himself illustrates its use in his own work with two examples from the *Quatuor pour la fin du temps*, both shown in the illustration below. As the illustration also shows, however, the principal theme from Takemitsu's *Quatrain* – itself openly indebted, as the title suggests, to Messiaen's *Quatuor* – begins with a figure almost identical to Messiaen's (the only difference being that the second interval is reduced from a major to a minor second); while the pitch-collection projected by the Messiaen idea, [0,1,2,6,7], is found in inversion in the boxed section of the passage from *Valeria* quoted in the same example. The derivation of this latter from Messiaen's melodic tag might seem, on paper at least, to be rather less than convincing; but, when heard in context, this lugubrious 'cello solo irresistibly recalls to mind the *Louange à l'immortalité de Jésus*, especially with its accompaniment of sustained harmonies for electric organ, which at least suggest Messiaen's organ music if not the *ondes Martenot* of the *Louange*'s original transcription in *Fêtes des belles eaux* (although one cannot be certain whether Takemitsu would have been familiar with the latter.)

Another of the stock melodic formulæ which Messiaen describes in his *Technique*, and which he claims to have derived from the opening of Mussorgsky's *Boris Godunov*, is that exemplified by the opening of the clarinet solo in the *Abîme des oiseaux* of the *Quatuor*, as shown in Ex. 128a. This ascending 'zig-zag' pattern also appears to have held some appeal for Takemitsu – the same general melodic contour (albeit with different intervallic content) is projected by the brief thematic

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<sup>340</sup> See above, Section 3.1.8

1.) Messiaen: Louange à l'immortalité de Jésus



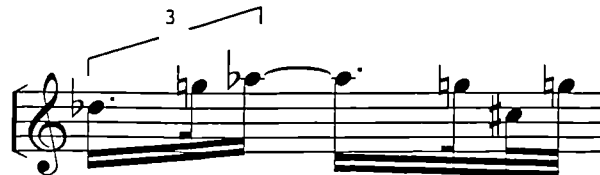
2.) Messiaen: Ex. 94 from "Technique"



3.) Messiaen: Fouillis de l'arc-en-ciel, pour l'ange qui annonce la fin du temps



4.) Takemitsu: Quatrain



5.) Takemitsu: Valeria



Ex. 127: Comparison of themes by Takemitsu and Messiaen with example 94 of the latter's *Technique*

excerpts from *Folios*, *To the Edge of Dream* and *Vers, l'arc-en-ciel*, *Palma* quoted in Ex. 128b.

Two other melodic types associated with Messiaen, the *Thème de l'amour* of *Turangalîla* and the *Thème de joie* to be found in the *Vingt regards* and *Visions de l'Amen*, also have close relatives in the corpus of melodic materials employed by Takemitsu. The first of these (Ex. 129), with its distinctive final gesture of

(i) Messiaen, "Technique", Ex. 75 (after Mussorgsky)



(ii) Ibid., Ex. 76



(iii) Quatuor pour la fin du temps, III, "Abîme des oiseaux" (opening)



Ex. 128a: Messiaen, melodic pattern derived from Mussorgsky in  
*Technique de mon langage musical*

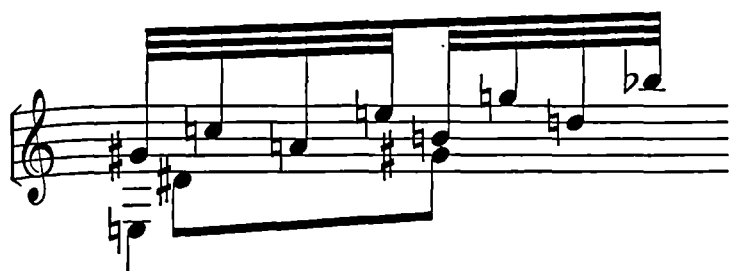
falling fourth preceded by melodic leap, is readily suggested by such melodic types as that represented by the theme from *Orion* quoted above in Ex. 13<sup>341</sup>; while the triumphant rising pentatonic phrase of the second is briefly recalled by a similar emotional upsurge in the extended melody first heard on the clarinet shortly after letter C of *Quatrain*, whose initial four pitches map onto the *Thème de joie* exactly (Ex. 130), and are elsewhere heard as an independent melodic *incipit*.



Ex. 129: Messiaen, *Turangalîla Symphony*, 'Thème de l'amour'

<sup>341</sup> Section 2.2.4

(i) Folios, p. 3, system 5



(ii) To the Edge of Dream, K/1 (guitar)



(iii) Vers, l'arc-en-ciel, Palma, G/7 (ob. d'amore)



**Ex. 128b: Takemitsu: melodic ideas with similar 'zig-zag' contours**

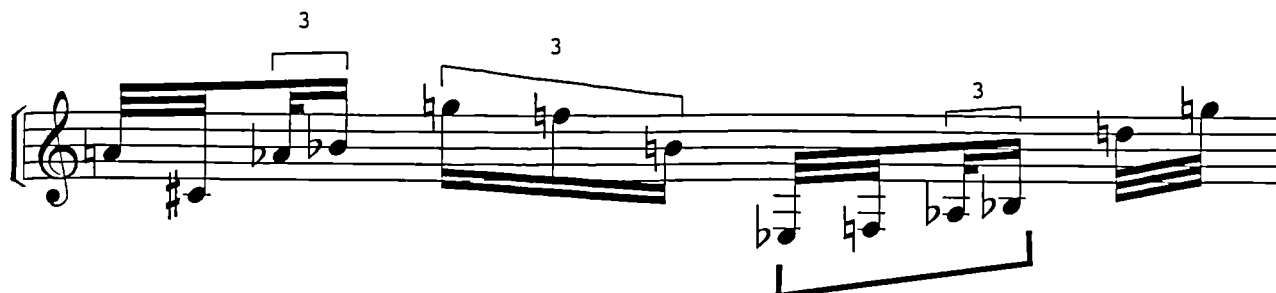
However, melodic constructions based on the pitches of a pentatonic mode, which are found quite regularly in Takemitsu's output, could of course imply a number of other possible sources of influence in addition to the Messiaenic – including, of course, traditional Japanese and other Oriental musics. The *incipit* of the principal recurring idea of *A String around Autumn*, for instance<sup>342</sup> recalls one of the best-known classics of the *Gagaku* repertoire, *Etenraku* (Ex. 131), as well as – perhaps somewhat bizarrely – the 'theme of knightly character' on which Richard Strauss based his famous set of orchestral variations (Ex. 132).

Another Western composer whose influence Takemitsu has specifically acknowledged is Anton Webern; indeed, he has gone so far as to admit that 'before the discovery of traditional Japanese music in the 1960s, he was "enslaved" by the music of Webern'<sup>343</sup>. Apart from the general angularity of certain gestures from the composer's '*pointilliste*' phase, however, or the sparse thematic aphorisms of works such as *Music of Tree* (1961), there is little to suggest the direct influence

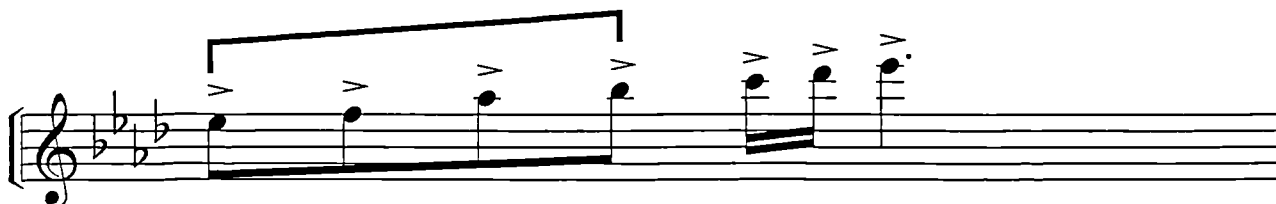
<sup>342</sup> Quoted above as Ex. 97, Section 3.1.7

<sup>343</sup> Ohtake, op. cit., p. 81 (quoting from Takemitsu's 'Mirror of Tree, Mirror of Grass', p. 29)

(i) Quatrain (1975), G/1 (cl.)



(ii) Messiaen, "Thème de Joie" (20 Regards sur l'Enfant Jésus)



Ex. 130: Comparison between Takemitsu, *Quatrain*, and Messiaen, *Thème de joie* (from *Vingt regards sur l'enfant Jésus*)

平調 越天楽  
HYŌ-JŌ ETENRAKU

芝 祐幸 抄出  
Transcribed by S. Shiba

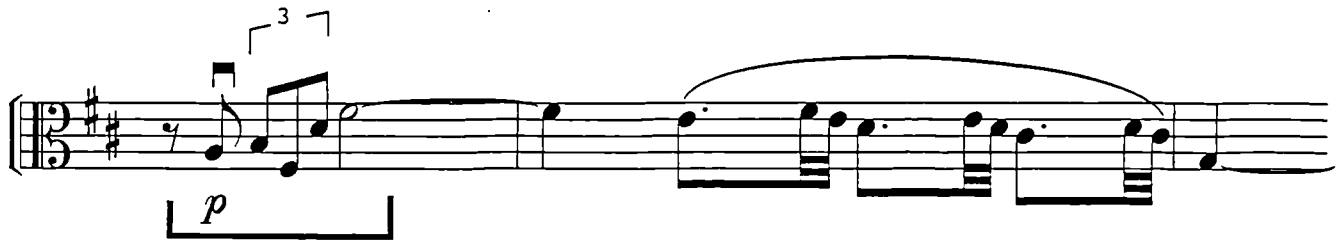
小曲 早西拍子 拍子十六  
水四拍子加

SHŌ  
RYŪTEKI

Solo

Ex. 131: *Etenraku* (traditional Japanese), opening

of the Austrian master on the composer's melodic style. One clear exception is the example below (Ex. 133) from *Coral Island*, where the influence of the rocking major and minor seconds from the harp passage quoted from the *Six Orchestral Pieces* is unmistakable.



Ex. 132: Strauss, *Don Quixote*

**Webern, 6 pieces Op. 6, VI, bb. 2- 5 (harp)**



**Takemitsu, "Coral Island", p. 12, b. 4 (harp)**



Ex. 133: Comparison between themes from Webern's Op. 6 and  
Takemitsu's *Coral Island*

Despite Takemitsu's professed 'enslavement' to the music of Webern, most listeners would probably agree that his later work especially suggests the pervasive influence of another member of the Second Viennese School, Alban Berg. Jōji Yuasa probably sums up the typical response to Takemitsu's later music quite well when he notes that

'...Takemitsu's superb instrumentation and timbral expertise, as well as his melodic gestures, strike my ears as continuations sometimes of Debussy (*Tree Line* etc.), sometimes of Berg (*Far Calls. Coming, Far!* etc.), and sometimes

of Messiaen (*Entre-Temps*, *Dream/Window* etc.)<sup>344</sup>

Berg's influence is palpable right at the beginning of Takemitsu's career, in the *Futatsu no Rento*, where, by a neat correspondence, its source is the work with which Berg launched his own compositional career, the *Sonata* for piano, Op. 1. The falling fifths in the fifth and sixth bars of Takemitsu's theme, for instance, strongly recall the 'second subject' of Berg's sonata, and one suspects Takemitsu must unconsciously have recognised this resemblance when he came to recompose the piece as *Litany*, for he in fact intensifies the relationship by adding an accompaniment to the opening theme which cadences in a very similar manner to the opening subject of Berg's work. Although on paper the two passages quoted in Ex. 134 might appear to bear little relationship one to another, the effect in performance of the two cadences – their similar placing close to the start of the work, the falling fifths of the bass, the Db-C♯ figures in the inner part, the G♯ in the upper voice and the final high Ab – all combine to suggest the profound influence of Berg's own youthful example on both the twenty-year-old and the sexagenarian Takemitsu.

It is of course in Takemitsu's later works, with their harmonic and textural warmth and sensuality, that the influence of Berg's example becomes especially apparent; and this influence is to be found in the thematic content of such works as much as in other areas. The 1981 string quartet *A Way a Lone*, for example, recalls Berg's *Lyric Suite* in several passages, the most striking of which is perhaps that quoted in Ex. 135. Here the inverted form of Takemitsu's 'S-E-A' motive reveals its identity with the *incipit* of the twelve-note theme with which the second movement of Berg's work opens, while the tied rhythm across the barline is also clearly modelled on Berg's example.<sup>345</sup>

Most striking of all the correspondences between Alban Berg and late Takemitsu, however, are those to be found between Berg's Violin Concerto and Take-

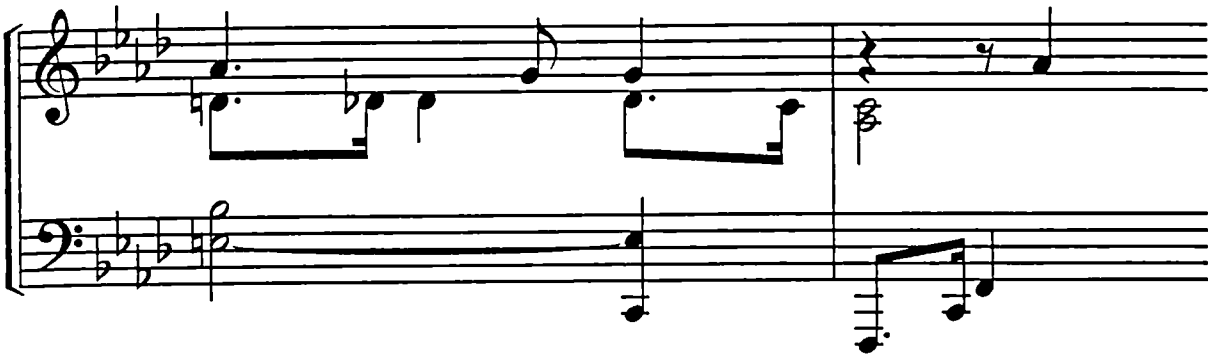
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<sup>344</sup> Yuasa, Jōji: 'Hihanteki Takemitsuron', *Polyphone* Vol. 8 (1991), p. 31

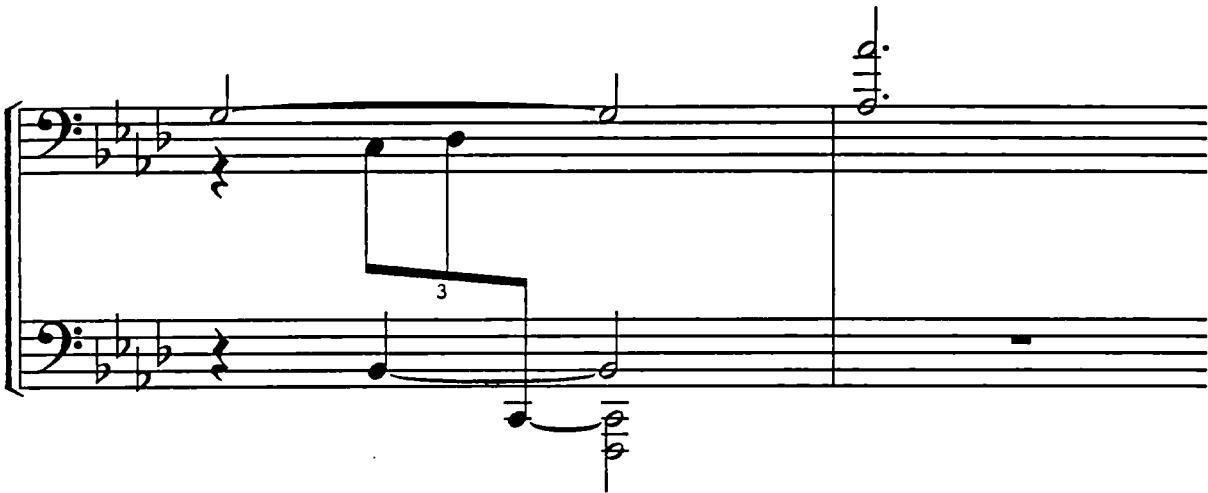
<sup>345</sup> Interestingly the critics of the work's earliest performances were also strongly reminded of Berg's music; the *New York Times* observed that 'the work's mood is constantly evocative of Berg's *Lyric Suite*' (quoted by Akiyama in 'Ongaku o yobimasu mono', p. 175), while of the work's European première the *Journal de Genève* remarked that 'both the spirit of the work, and the manner of writing, can be thought of as close to that of the Viennese School, in particular Berg' (quoted by Funayama in 'Takemitsu Tōru Kenkyū Nōto 2', p. 54)



**Berg, Op. 1, bb. 3 - 4 (transposed)**



**Takemitsu, "Litany", bb. 2 - 3**

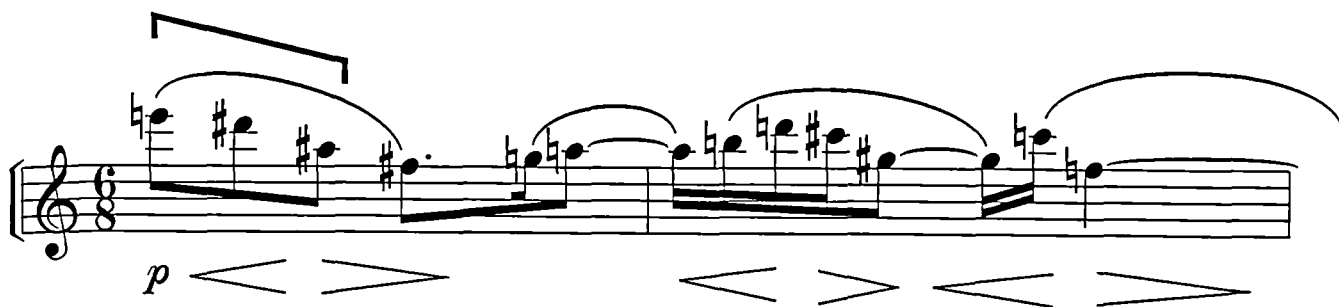


**Ex. 134: Comparison between Takemitsu, *Litany* and Berg, Op. 1**

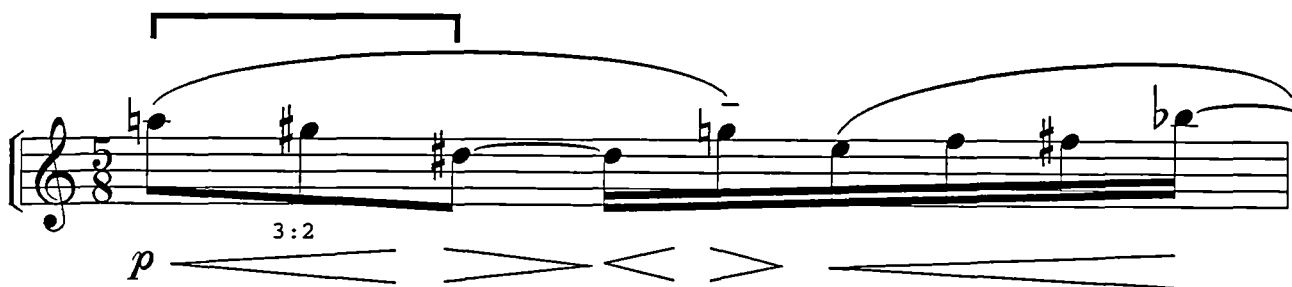
mitsu's *Far Calls. Coming, Far!*, written for the same combination of violin and orchestra. It will be recalled that, in the latter work, Takemitsu expands his 'S-E-A' cell by the addition of a series of rising thirds, alternately major and minor<sup>346</sup>; and, since the beginning of Berg's famous twelve-note series for his concerto is constructed out of precisely the same intervallic materials, it follows that a transposition of Takemitsu's motive will correspond in part exactly to the materials used by Berg, as Ex. 136 shows.

<sup>346</sup> See above, Section 3.3.2, Ex. 115

(i) Berg, *Lyric Suite*, II, 1-2 (vln. 1)



(ii) *A Way a Lone* (1981), b.92 (vln. 1)



Ex. 135: Comparison between Takemitsu, *A Way a Lone* and Berg, *Lyric Suite*

This parallel can in fact be pushed even further, however, for in certain instances Takemitsu extends the descending form of his theme downwards through three more intervals of a third, yielding a version which maps exactly onto seven notes of the retrograde of Berg's series; furthermore, the descending whole-tone figure at the beginning of the latter, inverse of the Bach *Es ist genug* tag, also has an exact counterpart at one point in Takemitsu's score (Ex. 137).

Lest it be thought that this last comparison is a rather far-fetched one, shown alongside this as Ex. 138 is the four-note gesture for bassoon, harp and muted horn that appears on the last page of Takemitsu's score, with the gesture for muted horn at the equivalent point in Berg's score shown underneath. Takemitsu's indebtedness to Berg here surfaces to a level where immediate aural recognition becomes inevitable.

Finally, as intimated at the head of this section, an attempt will be made to

Berg, vln. conc., P

Violin staff (top):

- Measure 1: G4 (half note)
- Measure 2: A4 (half note)
- Measure 3: B4 (half note)
- Measure 4: C5 (half note)

Piano staff (bottom):

- Measure 1: G2 (half note)
- Measure 2: A2 (half note)
- Measure 3: B2 (half note)
- Measure 4: C3 (half note)

**Ex. 136: Comparison between materials from Takemitsu, *Far Calls. Coming, Far!* and Berg, *Violin Concerto***

suggest origins for one particular aspect of Takemitsu's thematic method, rather than simply supply possible sources of influence on specific themes. Takemitsu's technique of deriving musical materials by transcribing Romanized words into their

FCCF, O/ 11 - 12



Berg, II, 228 - 230



Ex. 138: As previous Ex.

equivalent note letter-names has any number of historical precedents, from Bach's transcriptions of his own name in the seventeenth century, through the Romantics' 'A-B-E-G-G' and 'Frei Aber Froh' motto-themes to Boulez's *Messagesquise* in our own time. But perhaps the most likely candidate for influence here is, once again, Alban Berg's example. The *Lyric Suite* itself, of course, makes secretive use of such devices to project its amorous 'programme', but since Takemitsu was already using his 'S-E-A' theme before the mysteries of Berg's score were finally decoded in the late 'seventies, it is unlikely that this work can be regarded as the primary source of influence on this aspect of Takemitsu's compositional method. However, the encoding of the names of the Viennese trinity in Berg's *Chamber Concerto* has long been public knowledge (even if it has taken rather longer to fathom some of that work's darker secrets), and since Takemitsu himself wrote a chamber concerto of his own in 1955, one is entitled to surmise that a decisive influence from this quarter on Takemitsu's own use of such artificially-derived thematic materials is a more than likely probability.

### 3.4 Serial techniques

Takemitsu, it will be recalled, once admitted that 'before actually writing the notes I prepare carefully, and sometimes I construct a series or something like

that<sup>347</sup>, but despite this confession, rarely gave any more precise details about whatever debt to serialism his precompositional processes might owe. The most obvious exception to this general reticence came surprisingly late in the composer's career; in his programme notes for the orchestral work *Spirit Garden*, Takemitsu revealed that

'The work is based on a twelve-note row from which three chords each of four notes are generated. These chords, accompanied by changes in tone colour... are an ever-present undercurrent, vibrating at the fundamental, from which a musical garden is composed.'<sup>348</sup>

Akimichi Takeda, in whose notebook Takemitsu was kind enough to sketch the above-mentioned 'three chords' during the concert intermission following the work's première, remarks that 'the fact that this work is the first of the composer's to employ twelve-note technique invites discussion'<sup>349</sup>, but in fact this was by no means at all the composer's first excursion into dodecaphonic territory. What is surprising, indeed, is rather the recrudescence at this very late stage of Takemitsu's career of a technique with which most of his visible experiments date from a period lasting roughly from the end of the 'fifties to the end of the following decade. For instance, in the second movement of *Pause Ininterrompue*, written in 1959, as one commentator puts it:

'A theme utilizing all twelve tones without duplication is presented in the opening two measures...It is immediately repeated at  $T^3$ , registrally inverted to form an arch shape of antecedent and consequent.'<sup>350</sup>

Ex. 139 shows this twelve-note theme, here labelled as the prime form  $P^0$ , and the transposition by which it is immediately succeeded. As well as the suggestion of an antecedent-consequent pairing which Koozin suggests, there is also an analogy with Takemitsu's favoured 'sequential repetition' device here; furthermore, it is

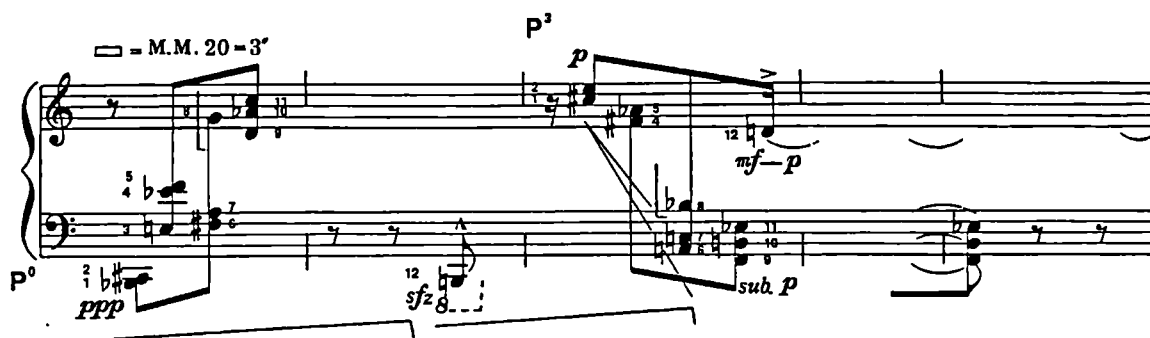
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<sup>347</sup> Takemitsu, Cronin and Tann, op. cit., p. 208

<sup>348</sup> Sleeve notes for DENON COCO-78944

<sup>349</sup> Takeda, op. cit., p. 20

<sup>350</sup> Koozin (1988), p. 86. Funayama, who also identifies this twelve-note 'series', remarks interestingly that the movement contains twelve gradations of dynamics from *pppp* to *sfff* – although he wisely adds that 'this is not "integrated-serialist" music' ('Takemitsu Tōru Kenkyū Nōto 5', p. 49)



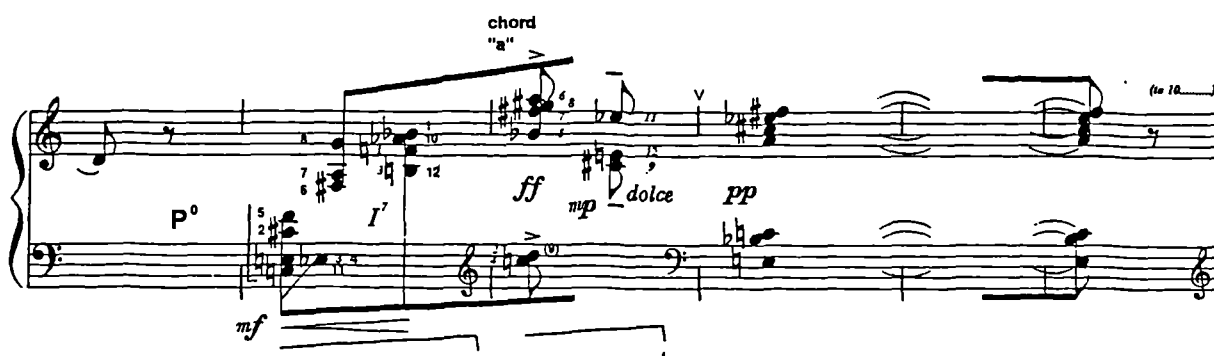
Ex. 139: *Pause Ininterrompue II*, bb. 1-5

significant that with this second statement of his 'tone-row' Takemitsu is already departing from literal repetition by omitting one of the pitches, G $\sharp$ .

Koozin's use of a 'serial' vocabulary to describe the work ends here, but it is in fact possible to extend the concept of a reading in such terms a little further, even though by the very next phrase the descriptions involved in doing so necessarily become tortuous, so complex are the aberrations from strict serial rigour. Essentially the passage in question (Ex. 140) begins as a version of  $P^0$  with pitches 1 and 11 swapped over<sup>351</sup>; however the ninth pitch, D $\sharp$ , is held over from the collection, and the final B $\sharp$  acts as a pivotal pitch, telescoping the series with a statement of  $I^7$  in which the second pitch, also D $\sharp$ , is again held over, eventually appearing as part of the chordal attack in the third bar. Pitch 10 of  $I^7$  is in its turn held over, possibly appearing as the sustained G at the beginning of bar 12 (quoted above in Section 2.2.8, Ex. 19a. In the example below, the pitches of  $P^0$  are shown in upright characters, and those of  $I^7$  in Roman italics.)

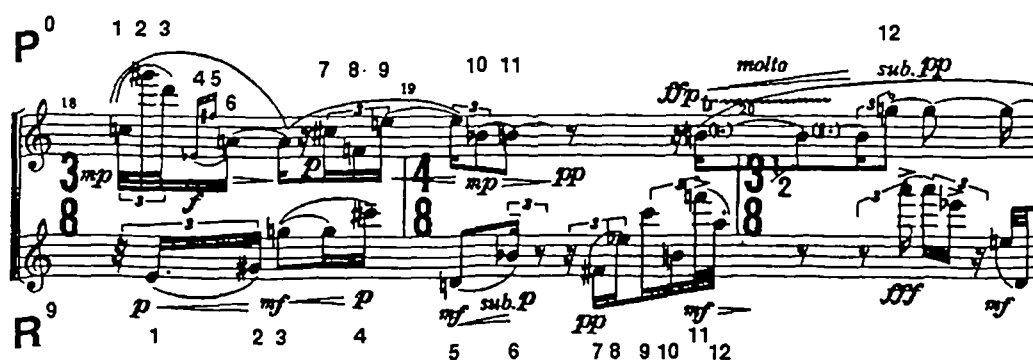
From this point onwards, however – with the exception of an unequivocal statement of  $I^0$  in bb. 21-23, and a reminiscence of the opening bars in b. 31 – Takemitsu appears to abandon the strict application of his serial method, preferring instead, for the most part, to extrapolate isolated harmonies from his 'row' and rearrange them in free combinations (the chord marked 'a' in the above example, for instance, is the 'iconic' harmony [0,2,3,4,6,8] described in Section 3.1.7 and quoted in Ex. 69). Thus, although the work begins by apparently setting out unambiguous

<sup>351</sup> Pitches of twelve-note series in all the examples have been numbered 1-12, not 0-11



Ex. 140: Ibid., bb. 6-11

premisses for some sort of fully-worked out serial 'argument', the expectation thus raised remains almost provocatively unfulfilled – clearly the composer is interested in no such thing. This type of practice, in which serial method rises intermittently to the compositional surface, only to disappear from view once again, is in fact highly typical of the composer's use of the device.



Ex. 141: *Masque I*, bb. 18-20

Thus in the first movement of *Masque* for two flutes, also written in 1959, one finds passages of such obvious serial derivation as that quoted in Ex. 141, alongside other, quite unrelated materials; the movement as a whole, in fact, presents an odd mixture of 'extravagance' in terms of the number of materials it employs, and 'economy' in terms of the rigour with which certain of those materials are

developed. In addition, this movement also affords an interesting example of the application of the rigour of serial 'method' to materials that are not strictly speaking 'dodecaphonic' in nature. Thus, in bb. 1-17 of the work, while the second flute is preoccupied with 'twelve-note' materials derived from Ex. 141, the first flute puts to similar use the materials shown in Ex. 142. This is one of Takemitsu's 'freely palindromic' passages, in which the second half is an approximate retrograde inversion of the first; and to make clearer the comparison, the pitches of the *canzicrans* version, (b.), have been shown in reverse order, so that they line up with their counterparts in the 'original' form, (a.)<sup>352</sup> It will be seen that, while the first twelve pitches do indeed constitute a unit which is rotated cyclically, the repeated pitches which it contains disqualify it from the title of 'series'; furthermore, that this unit may be subdivided into two subsets of nine and three notes, and that the two are treated independently of each other at the first repetition – the first being heard a tone higher, the second raised by only a semitone. Finally, the second section deviates still further from a literal retrograde inversion of the first, globally transposing an intermediate passage of six pitches up a semitone, and then returning to the original pitch of the passage for the final six notes.<sup>353</sup>

As the above examples illustrate, even when making overt use of his serial materials, Takemitsu is not interested in preserving the ordering of the original 'row.' In the case of *Sacrifice*, a rather Boulezian-sounding work for alto flute, lute, and vibraphone/crotales written in 1962, the 'series' that emerges at certain points is treated with such freedom that it becomes simply a resource from which materials, particularly of a harmonic nature, are derived, rather than a recurrent ordering principle. For this reason, it is more profitable to think of this twelve-note idea as a series of four trichords, rather than a definitive ordering of the pitches of which the latter are composed. Ex. 143 gives what has arbitrarily been labelled the 'prime form' of the set, derived from the passage shown in Ex. 144 (the alto flute part in the top stave is notated in transposition.)

The extremely free manner in which Takemitsu handles this material, even on those rare occasions which make explicit reference to it, can be judged from Exx. 145 and 146. The material here derives from  $P^2$  of the series shown above; and

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<sup>352</sup> Within each system, the three staves are to be read one after the other

<sup>353</sup> I.e. the *first* six notes in the ordering given here



a.)

b.)

orig. pitch

semitone...

....higher

Ex. 142: *Masque I*, bb. 1-17, reduction of first flute part

$P^0$

inversion

inversion

[0, 2, 3] [0, 1, 3] [0, 3, 4] [0, 1, 4]

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

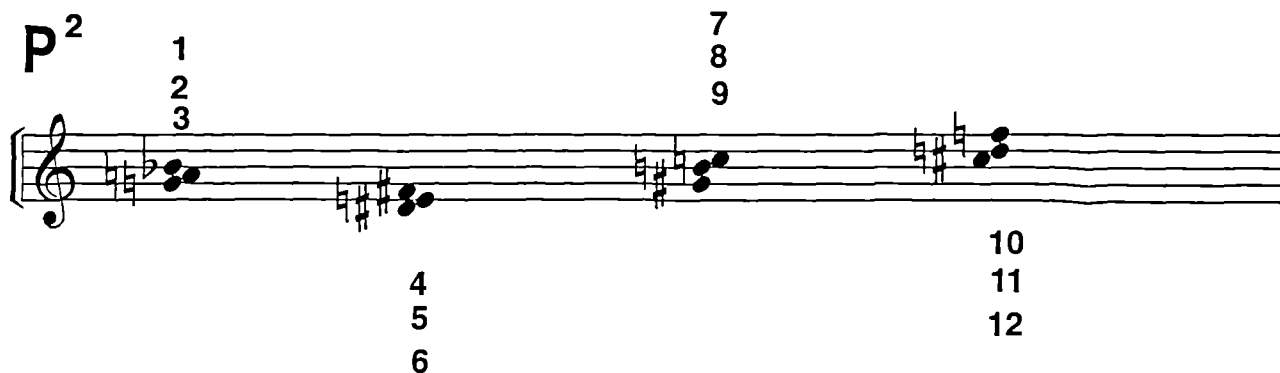
Ex. 143: *Sacrifice*: basic 'series'

it will be seen that, although the treatment of the first hexachord does not respect the ordering of individual pitches, it does at least respect the above-suggested

Ex. 144: *Ibid.*, *Chant I* (first movement), system 2

segmentation into constituent trichords. The presentation of the second half of the series, however, violates the original ordering of events even at this level.

Statements such as the above, however, which clearly derive from the full twelve-note original, are the exception in this piece, whose debt to its possible serial inception manifests itself more often in the form of looser reference to the trichord forms of which the generative set is comprised. It will be seen that the second of these, [0,1,3], is the inversion of the first, as the last trichord, [0,1,4], is of



Ex. 145: Ibid., series of Ex. 143 at transposition  $P^2$

Ex. 146: Ibid., opening of *Chant 2* (second movement)

the third; furthermore, that pitches 1-7 belong to the same octatonic set (mode  $II^2$ ) and pitches 8-12 to another (mode  $II^3$ ). Such care over the internal construction of his series is quite common in Takemitsu; that which appears intermittently in *Music of Tree* (1961), for instance, resembles the above in that pitches 1-7 again form a seven-note octatonic subset, overlapping in this case with pitches 6-12, which form another (Ex. 147).

It will be observed, moreover, that in this instance there is in addition an

P<sup>0</sup>



Ex. 147: *Music of Tree*, basic series (form suggested by double-bass part, bb. 29-30)

internal symmetry to the row; the collection represented by the second half is in fact a transposed inversion of that represented by the first ([0,1,3,4,6,9]), and indeed this second hexachord can be considered a reordered inversion of the first. The rationale which produces such ‘hexachordally combinatorial’ series in Takemitsu’s music is clearly closely akin to that responsible for the ‘chromatic complementarity’ already observed as a feature of so many of his twelve-note vertical aggregates.<sup>354</sup> Furthermore, just as the two halves of this symmetrical collection each project a subset of Takemitsu’s favoured octatonic mode, so other series of this type may project other collections characteristic of the composer. Mention has already been made, for example, of the series stated at the beginning of *Hika* by the solo violin<sup>355</sup>, which, it was demonstrated, could be divided into two hexachords each projecting the [0,1,4,5,8,9] or ‘6-20’ collection, and in consequence bore comparison with a number of classic dodecaphonic constructions dating back as far as Liszt’s *Faust* Symphony. The principle of dividing the total-chromatic into four augmented triads which is the basis of the latter example is also implicit in the construction of the three chords on which *Spirit Garden* is based (Ex. 148), each of which consists of an augmented triad plus one extra pitch deriving from the notes of the remaining augmented triad needed to complete the chromatic collection. As Miyuki Shiraishi observes in her sleeve-notes for the work, these chords are formed by extrapolating pitches 1-4-7-10, 2-5-8-11 and 3-6-9-12 from the basic series (A-B $\flat$ -E-E $\flat$ -D-A $\flat$ -G-F $\sharp$ -C-B-C $\sharp$ -F) of the work – suggesting a new interest in late Takemitsu for a similar

<sup>354</sup> See above, Section 3.1.3

<sup>355</sup> See above, Section 3.1.1, Ex. 58



**Ex. 148: Basic chords of *Spirit Garden***

type of numerological constructivism to that which fascinated the composer of *Lulu* in his final years.

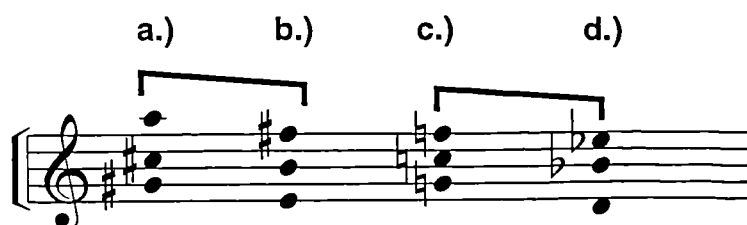
The basic materials of another work for violin and piano, *From far beyond Chrysanthemums and November Fog* (1983) – again a rather late example of Takemitsu's experimentation with quasi-serial methods – also illustrate two of the principles referred to in the previous paragraph: of chromatic complementarity on the one hand, and, on the other, derivation from pitch-collections favoured abundantly in other, non-serial contexts. This is another of the few scores about which the composer gave specific hints as to its mode of composition – and although his disclosure of six pitches and their 'shadow' in the preface to the score probably mystifies just as much as it reveals when one actually examines the music, it is nevertheless obvious that the 'shadow' is actually both an inversion and a chromatic complement to the six-note set, and that both project a pitch collection typical of Takemitsu, [0,2,3,4,6,8], a subset of the ubiquitous 'whole-tone+1' idea. Taken together, therefore, the two sets imply another series sharing the same properties of symmetry as the previous two examples (Ex. 149).



**Ex. 149: *From far beyond Chrysanthemums and November Fog*: basic hexachord and its 'shadow', as given by composer in preface to score**

However, despite the care which has obviously been lavished on the creation

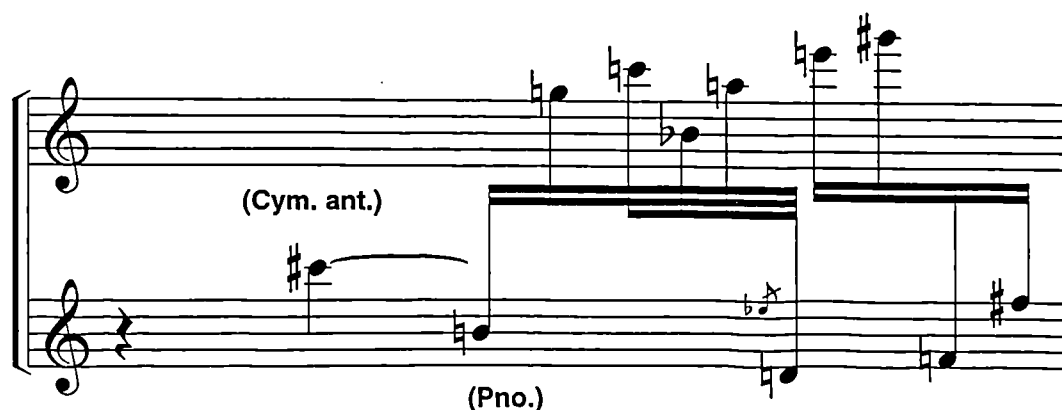
of such symmetrical sets at the precompositional stage, Takemitsu appears to take no further interest in the 'combinatorial' or other properties inherent in them, and treats them thenceforth in the same manner as he always treats his dodecaphonic materials, that is to say, as the source for very free combinations of pitch-materials, in which the original series only rarely resurfaces in recognisable form, if it all. And by the time *From far beyond* was composed, even such occasional glimpses of twelve-note working as are afforded by this work had already become a rarity in the composer's output. His experimentations with 'classic' serialism were therefore for the most part neither rigorous nor long-lived; yet, for all that, the application of the methods involved to non-serial materials was to prove a durable compositional resource for the composer, as it has, indeed, for twentieth-century composers in general. Devices such as inversion of materials, or the wholesale retrogression of passages to achieve the palindromic effects so beloved of the composer are a case in point; so too is the construction of the four trichords, described as 'harmonic pitch 1', from which the score of *Dream/Window* (1985) is fashioned. Here, despite the non-serial context, one finds that the sum pitch-content of the four trichords again comprises the total-chromatic, and that there is the same preoccupation with internal symmetry as exhibited by the serial materials recently examined – the second and fourth chords being inversions, respectively, of the third and first, and the whole of the second part yielding a transposed inversion of the diatonic ([0,2,4,5,7,9]) hexachord implied by the first (Ex. 150).



Ex. 150: *Dream/Window*, 'harmonic pitch 1' (as per: Takemitsu (1992), p. 78)

And the reverse side of the coin to this serial treatment of non-serial materials is demonstrated elsewhere. Just as in *Masque* the composer showed that it was possible to apply quasi-serial method to materials which did not actually project

the total-chromatic, so in instances such as that quoted in Ex. 151 he showed that it was possible to present the total-chromatic, but then resolutely resist to subject it to serial treatment.



Ex. 151: *Coral Island*, opening of 'Poem II'

### 3.4.1 Conclusions

It seems supererogatory to spell out precisely the sources from which Takemitsu obtained the above technical means. Serialism had, it is true, been adopted after the Second World War by Japanese composers such as Yoshino Irino (1921-1980) and Minao Shibata (1916-1996), but whether or not Takemitsu was directly influenced by other composers working in the East is of little real moment, since the ultimate source of all these composers' inspiration is the same, indisputably European one. The emulation of 'second Viennese' practice in some of the works examined above is transparent enough, and indeed, in certain works of the composer's earliest period, extends beyond the mere adoption of the serial method to include such features as the 'novel in a sigh' miniaturism of *Pause Ininterrompue*, which recalls such works as the Op. 19 piano pieces of Schoenberg. However, it is instructive to observe the highly individual manner in which Takemitsu handles these 'twelve-tone' materials. Even in works which make overt use of serial method, such as the second movement of the above-named piano work, although the techniques involved

‘...are similar to those used by Webern and Schoenberg, yet [they] do not have the procedural precision of the set theory as in the music of the Second Viennese School.’<sup>356</sup>

In fact, as has been seen, Takemitsu rapidly thwarts any expectations that his serial statement is to become the starting point for some kind of abstract adventure in musical logic, and simply uses it as the source-material for a more-or-less free study in texture and sonority. Such an approach, however, is not to be seen as a failure of rigour on Takemitsu’s part, but instead reflects a deeply-felt belief of the composer that intellectual systems of this sort, by assigning greater importance to the syntactical relationships between events, and predetermining their relationships, militate against what for him should be the essential focus of the music, the quality of individual sounding events in themselves. It is a point which he has articulated clearly on numerous occasions:

‘The twelve-tone method of composition may be the result of necessity, but it represents some very dangerous aspects. The mathematical and geometrical pursuit of sound apparent in this technique is purely an intellectual art.’<sup>357</sup>

‘The technique of constructing sounds through mathematical formulas is trivial...The work of inventing and constructing music really holds no interest for me.’<sup>358</sup>

While, as we have seen, Takemitsu did nevertheless often use such abstract mechanisms as a starting point, they interested him only inasmuch as they were means to an end, which was always the same end of producing real, unquantifiable, evanescent sounds unfolding in real time in a real world:

‘The reason why I’m interested in numbers is not to identify the musical structure of a piece logically by manipulating numbers. It is just the opposite. That is, through manipulating numbers I intend to make music into a process which is a real figure in the changing world.’<sup>359</sup>

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<sup>356</sup> Lee, Chung-Haing, *op. cit.*, p. 36

<sup>357</sup> Takemitsu, transl. Kakudo and Glasow, *op. cit.*, p. 80

<sup>358</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14

<sup>359</sup> ‘Yume to kazu’, p. 12. Translation by Taniyama, *op. cit.*, p. 86



The composer's final almost total abandonment of even the minimal serialism of his early years, and retention only of its more useful technical features, is therefore not merely a development which Takemitsu underwent in parallel with the majority of Western 'avant-garde' composers, but reflects a passionately held æsthetic conviction, to which more attention will be given in the concluding part of this thesis.

### 3.5 Emphasis on specific pitch-classes

Several commentators on Takemitsu's music, including the composer himself, have suggested that on frequent occasions in his scores, a specific pitch or collection of pitches can occupy a privileged status in comparison with the events surrounding it, being promoted thereby to the foreground of the listener's attention. Takemitsu makes use of this device to serve various ends, but four of these in particular would seem to merit special investigation here. First, the emphasised pitches may be sustained or repeated intermittently over a period, gaining thereby the quality of *pedal points*; secondly, the various pitches receiving local emphasis during the course of a piece may project some kind of overall *long-term progression*; thirdly, a privileged pitch may be treated in such a manner as to endow it with the qualities of a final in tonal music, in other words, *tonicised*; and, finally, the beginnings of sections in the composer's music may be linked to the ends of sections preceding them by the use of such emphasised pitch-classes as *common pitches*.

Each of these aspects of the composer's practice in this area will receive due attention in turn in the sections which follow, though as will readily appear, the nature of the subject is such that there will be considerable overlap between them.

#### 3.5.1 Pedal points

As hinted above, the repeated or sustained emphasis on a single pitch class which constitutes a pedal point or drone is a device whose utilisation by Takemitsu has been identified, not merely in the secondary literature on the composer, but by Takemitsu himself. In his description of the means whereby he arrived at the *materia musica* of *A Flock Descends into the Pentagonal Garden*, for instance<sup>360</sup>,

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<sup>360</sup> 'Yume to Kazu', pp. 7-8. A translation appears in Takemitsu, transl. Kakudo and Glasow, op. cit., p. 97ff.; there is also a summary, in English, in Ohtake, op. cit., pp. 29-33

Takemitsu describes a dream he experienced in which he saw a flock of white birds, led by a black bird, descending into the five-sided garden of the title. He decided to represent this black bird in musical terms by means of the note F $\sharp$ , central pitch of the black-note pentatonic scale which characterised the pentagonal garden; furthermore:

‘...in German that pitch [F $\sharp$ ] is *Fis*, which sounds like the English “fix”; and, with the intentional pun in mind, I use that F $\sharp$  as a fixed drone.’<sup>361</sup>

The precompositional processes by means of which Takemitsu derived his pitch materials from this basic concept, involving magic squares and suchlike ‘arcana’, are tortuous and in any case not pertinent to the subject under discussion. However, when finally translated into actual sound events, these precompositional decisions do have implications which bear upon the subject of the present enquiry. For example, when Takemitsu baldly sets out the six chords derived from his magic square at letter M of the score, the ‘fixing’ of the note F $\sharp$  referred to above means that this pitch appears in at least two octave registers, and sometimes three, in each of those chordal attacks; the same pitch, stabilised in the octave above middle C, is also sustained throughout the passage from I to K, and referred to at numerous other points in the score. The pitch thus functions in the manner of both of the types of ‘pedal point’ implicitly referred to at the beginning of this section: those in which the same pitch-class is emphasised throughout a section, but attacked repeatedly, and heard in different registers; and the more traditional definition of a ‘pedal’, that of a note simply sustained. Incidentally, there is evidence elsewhere that the pitch in question here had personal connotations for the composer – he speaks of ‘my favourite pitch, F $\sharp$ ’ whose ‘sound is like a mountain peak with surrounding vistas’<sup>362</sup>, and one is bound to wonder whether some of the other pitches to which he gave spotlight emphasis in his works did not have similar private significances for him.

Further implicit acknowledgement of Takemitsu’s interest in devices of this type is found in his preface to the score of *Tree Line* (1988):

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<sup>361</sup> Takemitsu, transl. Kakudo and Glasow, op. cit., p. 103

<sup>362</sup> Ibid., p. 119. The metaphor apparently derives from the middle position occupied by the pitch in the octave C-C

‘The music proceeds like a tapestry woven around D $\sharp$  and B $\flat$  in various modes, along with its main line of tonal variation.’

Reference to the score shows that the first part of this statement reveals another facet of Takemitsu’s practice in this area, the use of multiple pedals involving more than one pitch, or sustained harmonies. In the case of *Tree Line*, this device assumes importance in defining the overall formal articulation of the piece, a notable feature of which is the appearance of three similar sections projecting an essentially static harmony by means of long pedal notes, *ostinati* and ‘aleatorically’ repeated mobile materials, with the above pitches (plus F $\sharp$ ) given especial prominence.<sup>363</sup>

Numerous further examples of each of the above categories of pedal point can be found throughout Takemitsu’s output, although the device does not appear to figure in the scores of the composer’s very earliest years – a phenomenon also observed by Gibson, who, commenting on the absence of various features of the composer’s later manner in *Pause Ininterrompue*, notes that among other things ‘he has not yet begun to emphasise long pedal tones.’<sup>364</sup> By the time the ‘middle period’ works of the following decade appeared, however, repeated emphasis on a single pitch had become a feature of the composer’s style sufficiently characteristic to draw the attention of a commentator such as Wilson, who remarks on the way in which, in *November Steps*, the ‘emphasis and repetition of a single pitch provide a pitch focus amidst the array of complex string textures’<sup>365</sup>, with particular reference to the pedal ‘F’ with which the work opens, which according to him recurs ‘thematically’ elsewhere in the score – not just when the initial phrase is repeated in bar 64, but in the form of the sustained ‘F’s’ in bars 49-52 as well.<sup>366</sup>

While the above examples of pedal point fall into the category of that type in which the same pitch is repeatedly reaffirmed in various ways, the example below from *The Dorian Horizon* (1966) is of a true sustained single pitch – yet contains

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<sup>363</sup> The passages in question are: B - C; b. 7 of C - E; and b. 1 of H - I

<sup>364</sup> Gibson, op. cit.

<sup>365</sup> Wilson, op. cit., p. 184

<sup>366</sup> The emphasis on ‘F’ at the opening of this work is also remarked upon by Smaldone, who takes it as the starting-point for his reduction of the work to a sequence of nuclear pitches (see below, Section 3.5.2)

at the same time some of the features of the previous category, in that interest is imparted to this held Eb by projecting it with different timbres and in different rhythmic articulations, yielding a type of *Klangfarbenmelodie* on a single note that is highly typical of the composer (Ex. 152).

Ex. 152: *The Dorian Horizon*, bb. 22-27

The kind of double or multiple pedal point described in *Tree Line* also appears in several other works of the composer. In *A Flock Descends into the Pentagonal Garden*, for instance, the wind enter with a sustained panhexatonic chord at J, b. 3 which continues to sound throughout the dense harmonies of figs. 6 and 7, and finally emerges from the background at the end of this section. This emergence from background into foreground, reminiscent of the effects obtained by the exploitation of 'harmonic stratification' described in a previous section<sup>367</sup>, is also used to telling effect in *Eucalypts*, J/5-7, where a sustained E-G# dyad in the bass suddenly emerges from beneath dense string clusters – thereby imparting, momentarily, a strong suggestion of E major tonality.

<sup>367</sup> See above, Section 3.1.4

### 3.5.2 Long-term pitch progressions

If, as has been made abundantly clear from the foregoing, certain pitch-classes can occupy a privileged position in the hierarchy of events in Takemitsu's music from time to time, then it would appear to follow logically enough that a fruitful avenue of investigation for the analyst might be to ascertain whether the various pitches receiving such local emphasis during the course of a piece, taken together, would yield any patterns of significance, any large-scale progressions. Such a course has indeed been taken by several scholars of Takemitsu's music. Edward Smaldone, for instance, writing with particular reference to *November Steps*, and taking as his justification the composer's own pronouncement that the 'most important thing is to cut away', begins by suggesting that 'if we "cut away" the tone clusters we are in fact left with a very colourful, very elegant, and slowly evolving pitch motion.'<sup>368</sup> Proceeding from here, he selects from the opening of the work those pitches which, he would argue, 'Takemitsu has highlighted through orchestral doubling, registral placement, and so on,'<sup>369</sup> and notes that what we actually hear through the dense orchestral web are 'a precious few pitches which guide our ear along a large arch, providing a deeper level of structure to which the many small details of the passage relate.'<sup>370</sup> The skeletal reduction of salient pitches which Smaldone derives by this method, it has to be admitted, does not appear to tell us very much – it certainly reveals little palpable sense of overall directional movement, and the only conclusion Smaldone himself seems able to draw from it is that it illustrates the prevalence of [0,1,3,] and [0,1,4,] trichords at local and global levels. Nevertheless, the basic initial premiss of Smaldone's method, that the investigation of relationships between highlighted pitch-classes in Takemitsu's music can prove a fertile field for analytic inquiry, is clearly valid enough, since precisely this approach has been taken independently by other writers on the subject, often with more revealing results.

Timothy Koozin, for instance, describing the third movement of *Pause Ininterrompue*, notes that 'the lyrical melody of this piece fundamentally consists of a chromatic descent from E<sup>5</sup> to C<sup>5</sup>, extended over thirteen measures of music at very

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<sup>368</sup> Smaldone, op. cit., p. 218

<sup>369</sup> Ibid., p. 219

<sup>370</sup> Ibid.

slow tempo.<sup>371</sup> A similar observation appears to have occurred to Noriko Ohtake, although the manner in which she expresses it is more radical, since – perhaps under the influence of fond folk-memories of undergraduate Schenker classes – she is emboldened to assert that the entire melodic line (Ex. 153) outlines ‘essentially three descending notes (E, D and C).’<sup>372</sup> This apparently far-fetched reduction to a  $\hat{3}-\hat{2}-\hat{1}$  descent actually proves to be surprisingly convincing; especially when one takes into account such features as the fact that the D of b. 9 is harmonically supported by a transposition of the opening down a whole-tone, that it is followed by a rise of a minor third as the E at the opening had been, and that both the D in b. 7 and the C in b. 10 are introduced by a characteristic falling triplet figure found nowhere else.



Ex. 153: *Pause Ininterrompue*: melody of third movement, showing three descending pitches (after Ohtake)

The approach suggested by the above, of exploring the possible relationships between significant pitches in Takemitsu's melodic lines, in order to arrive at some kind of skeletal pitch-contour, can prove fruitful in other contexts. The melodic line of the first movement of *Pause Ininterrompue*, for instance, is a case in point

<sup>371</sup> Koozin (1988), p. 93

<sup>372</sup> Ohtake, op. cit., p. 80

(Ex. 154). Here the initial A $\flat$  may be regarded as simply an apoggiatura to the sustained and accented G $\sharp$  which follows it; the melodic line then rises from B $\flat$  to an accented E $\flat$ , a note which Koozin describes as a ‘focal pitch’ in the melody during this opening section.<sup>373</sup> It then continues with a characteristic figure which peaks on a high B $\flat$  and falls to A $\flat$ , and finally descends to the B $\flat$  below via a characteristic pair of descending minor thirds. The melodic line of the second phrase closely parallels this movement: beginning with an initial ascent from G, via B $\flat$ , to E $\flat$ , it twice falls from this pitch to A $\sharp$ , and is rounded off with an exact repeat of the descending minor thirds of the first phrase, creating a ‘rhyming’ ending.

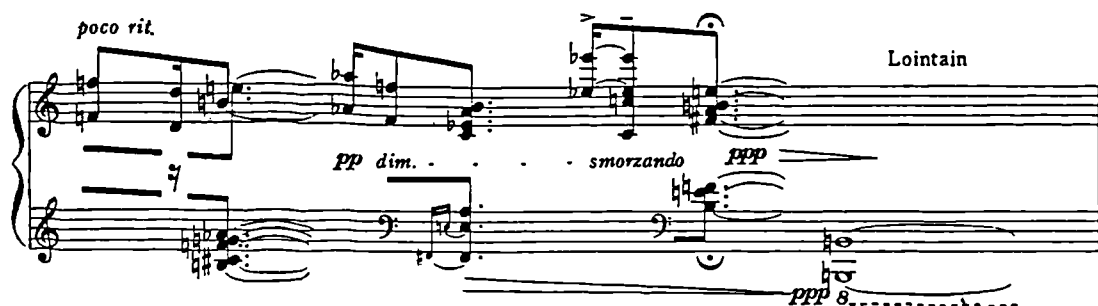


Ex. 154: *Pause Ininterrompue* I, bb. 1-5

Later in this movement, Takemitsu repeats the opening material exactly, but the second phrase is unexpectedly interrupted by a repeat of the second half of the first phrase a semitone higher. This brings about a conclusion on a B $\sharp$  final, which proves to have the function of a cadential sonority for the movement, in the form of a sustained statement of that pitch in the bass (Ex. 155).

The underlying principle of analysis in all of the above examples is essentially the same – to highlight connections between pitches which the analyst considers ‘privileged’ in some way, either by means of emphasis, registral placing, or some other feature. This same principle can of course be extended to pitches that assume prominence in several other ways than those described above. Miyuki Shiraishi, for instance, notes that the principal theme of *A Bird came down the Walk* for viola

<sup>373</sup> Koozin, op. cit., p. 83



Ex. 155: *Pause Ininterrompue I*, ending

and piano (1994) revolves around the ‘nuclear pitch’ of  $G\sharp^{374}$ , and from the seven transposed repetitions of this theme that occur through the work extrapolates the relevant ‘nuclear’ pitches to derive an overall progression  $G-A-C-E\flat-A-A-A$ .<sup>375</sup> Another form of privileged pitch class, notes in the extreme bass register, is taken by Koozin as his starting point for investigations into long-term pitch progression in *Rain Tree Sketch*; by isolating all the notes lower than  $E\flat^2$  which occur in this work, he derives a convincing long-term bass progression, particularly for the latter half, from the octave-doubled  $C\sharp$  in b. 42 down to the  $B\flat$  with which the work ends.<sup>376</sup> Indeed, he goes so far as to affirm that ‘in all Takemitsu’s solo piano works, isolated events in the low bass register are used to articulate important long-range connections.’<sup>377</sup>

Such findings as this suggest the possible presence of ‘bass progressions’ in Takemitsu’s music in the more familiar sense of movements between consecutive rather than isolated pitches. Miyoshi draws attention to one such ‘bass line’ in *Dream/Window*, where the lowest pitches of bars 4-6 descend by whole tones ( $B\flat-A\flat-G\flat$ ), the latter is treated as an enharmonic  $F\sharp$  to descend to  $B$  in bar 6-7, and the roots of the ‘dominant’ harmonies in bars 8-10 again descend by whole tones ( $D-C-B\flat$ ).<sup>378</sup> A similar clear sense of directed bass movement can be gathered

<sup>374</sup> This is in fact the same theme as the principal idea of *A Flock Descends into the Pentagonal Garden*; see Section 7.2 below

<sup>375</sup> Shiraishi, op. cit., p. 49

<sup>376</sup> Koozin (1991), p. 136.

<sup>377</sup> Ibid., p. 133

<sup>378</sup> Miyoshi, op. cit., p. 133



from Ex. 156, taken from the violin and piano work *Hika* (1966), where the lowest pitches outline a chromatic descent from F $\sharp$  to B $\flat$  (the letters over the system also show that most of the chords simply comprise transpositions of the same three ‘iconic’ harmonies).



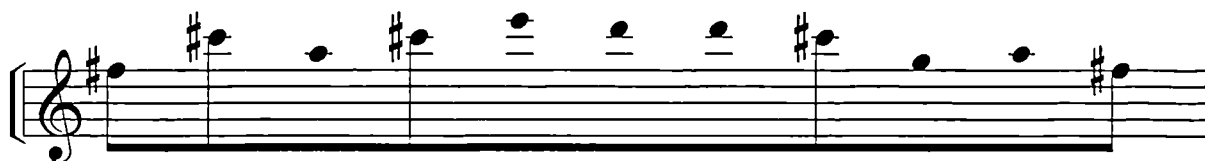
Ex. 156: *Hika*, final bars

Finally, another manner in which pitches can assume privileged status is by being sustained to form pedal points, as described in the previous section. Drawing together all the pitches – especially bass notes – which receive emphasis in this fashion in the course of a piece may again suggest the presence of underlying linear progressions. For example, in *Far Calls. Coming, Far!* the succession of pitches which are projected as sustained bass notes during the course of the work is as follows: B $\flat$  (B/8), B $\sharp$  (D/3), C $\sharp$  (E/10), B $\flat$  (G/1), C $\sharp$  (G/9 and J), B $\sharp$  (K/6) and a final C $\sharp$  which is heard almost continually from L/2 to the end of the piece. The whole progression thus comprises a chromatic ascent, twice undertaken, and elaborated on the second occasion, from B $\flat$  to a long-sustained C $\sharp$ ; and it can hardly be coincidental that this latter pitch turns out to be the ‘tonal centre’ towards which the work has been gravitating. This further aspect of the emphasis which Takemitsu occasionally accords to specific pitches, however, properly belongs to another area of his practices in this respect, which will be dealt with in the following sub-section.

### 3.5.3 Tonicisation of pitches

Takemitsu’s use of an F minor key signature at the beginning of *Litany* has

The second movement of *Litany* itself provides a viable starting point. Like the final movement of Schoenberg's second quartet, it dispenses with a key signature, but ends on a chord of G $\flat$  major<sup>380</sup>. This tonal arrival, however, is not a wholly unexpected conclusion in the light of the overall melodic direction of the movement. For instance, although the harmonisation obscures the fact, the pitches of the melodic line with which the work opens all fall within the ambit of a kind of 'Phrygian' mode on F $\sharp$ , with particular emphasis not simply on this 'tonic' itself, but also its 'dominant' a fifth higher and, to a lesser extent, the 'third' of the tonic harmony, A $\flat$  (Ex. 157). And, in similar fashion to the manner in which this phrase revolves around F $\sharp$ , its answering phrase begins and ends with the 'dominant', C $\sharp$ .



This opening phrase reappears twice during the course of the movement, on the second occasion immediately prior to the harmonic ‘tonicisation’ of the concluding bars; furthermore, throughout the outer sections of the movement, emphases on the pitches F $\sharp$ , C $\sharp$  and G $\sharp$  occur frequently in the melodic line. By contrast, the middle section of the work, with its octatonic melodic lines and emphasis on C $\flat$ , perhaps serves to bring this ‘F $\sharp$ -tonicity’ of the outer parts into focus, by emphasising the

380 Spelt as F $\sharp$  major in the Schoenberg, of course

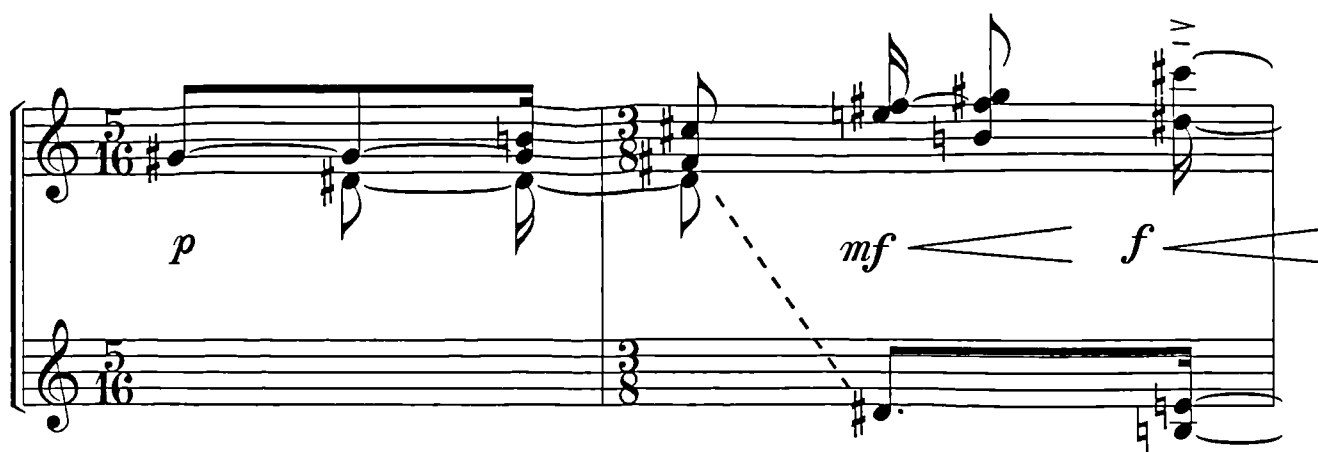
pitch at the furthest extreme, in terms of the cycle of fifths, from the 'home key' of the work's conclusion.

It may perhaps occasion no great surprise to discover such clear tonal conclusions in a work based on a 1950 original (a similarly unambiguous gravitation towards E $\flat$  major characterises the *Distance de Fée* of 1951). But even at the height of the composer's *avant-garde* experimentation during the 'sixties and 'seventies there are passages in which the function of certain pitches as tonal centres is clearly implied. Few could dispute, for instance, that the massive *Asterism* for piano and orchestra (1967) epitomises the grand modernist gesture typical of its epoch; yet, even here, one finds a single pitch – in this case, G $\sharp$ /A $\flat$  – granted privileged status as the work progresses, and eventually emerging as the ultimate tonal destination. Emphasis on this pitch-class can be detected from around b. 81 of the score onwards, where it first forms the uppermost pitch of a recurring two-chord gesture for wind, and then receives various kinds of re-emphasis over the course of the succeeding pages. It is after the work's shattering, multi-layered chromatic climax, however, that this pitch really begins to enjoy spotlight status in the musical drama: after the orchestral cataclysm, the music subsides to a sustained string harmony of which G $\sharp$  forms the uppermost pitch; this same note is then picked up by the solo piano, and henceforth until the final G $\sharp$  attack for piano and harps is almost never absent from the musical texture. It is hard to dispute that this constant emphasis is intended to bestow upon the pitch the attributes of a convincing tonicity, especially when one takes into account the effect of the piano passage quoted in Ex. 158, with its G $\sharp$  minor triad and confinement of pitch-materials to a six-note diatonic mode centred upon that note. Akiyama in fact suggests that the emphasis on this particular 'tonic' might represent yet another example of Take-mitsu's direct transliteration of words into note-names: 'G $\sharp$ =A $\flat$ ....is this sounding of the "As" [i.e. German A $\flat$ ] of *Asterism* the solution to the riddle?'<sup>381</sup>

A similar selection of one, or possibly two, pitches for the rôle of tonal centre has been detected by Edward Smaldone in the mid-period work *Autumn*, who notes that 'E $\flat$  (spelled D $\sharp$ ) also serves as the final goal of the composition, played

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<sup>381</sup> Akiyama, 'Saishin Meikyokyu Kaisetsu Zenshū' Vol. 7, p. 470. Shiraishi similarly suggests that the use of A as 'nuclear pitch' at the beginning of *Air* may be a reference to that work's title (op. cit., p. 49)



Ex. 158: *Asterism*, letter G, bb. 7-8

by the harp and celeste over the sustained B $\natural$  of the basses.<sup>382</sup> And in *Folios*, a 1974 work for solo guitar, the tonality implied throughout the work is clearly the A minor of the Bach chorale quotation with which it concludes<sup>383</sup> – a key hinted at by means of such devices as the ‘pedal note’ on A in the third movement (achieved on this non-sustaining instrument by means of reiteration), the use of the bottom string of the guitar as a kind of ‘dominant’, and the penultimate chord of the first movement, to which attention has already been drawn in another context.<sup>384</sup>

However, it is of course in the ‘third period’ of Takemitsu’s composing career that the gravitation of individual works towards the ‘sea of tonality’ becomes almost a matter of routine. Tonal endings are legion in these works, and often, though not always, associated with the *panpentatonic* harmonic category to which attention has been drawn already<sup>385</sup>; furthermore, one observes an apparent preference in the composer for certain tonalities which serve as finals in more than one work of the period. Thus *Rain Tree*, *Rain Coming* and *A Way A Lone* all end with strong suggestions of D $\flat$  major; a closely related ‘modal’ B $\flat$  minor with flattened seventh is implied by the final B $\flat$  minor seventh chord of *Toward the Sea* and the ‘panpentatonic’ close of *Dreamtime*; *Garden Rain*, *Rain Spell* and *To the Edge of*

<sup>382</sup> Smaldone, op. cit., p. 224

<sup>383</sup> See below, Section 7.1

<sup>384</sup> See above, Section 3.1.1, Ex. 34

<sup>385</sup> See above, Section 3.1.1

*Dream* all end with affirmations of B $\flat$  as tonic, the latter after a series of chiming B $\flat$ s, each harmonised with a different chord, like the famous ‘chimes at midnight’ in Verdi’s *Falstaff*; while attention has already been drawn to the long-term pitch progression tending towards C $\sharp$  in *Far Calls. Coming, Far!*, a pitch which would also appear to have something like a tonic significance in *Orion and Pleiades, Twill by Twilight* and *A String around Autumn*, even if in the latter instance the effect of the final, panpentonic collection is to suggest rather a modal A minor by the placing of that pitch in the bass.

As some of the titles quoted in the above paragraph indicate, many of the later works which feature this kind of final submergence in a ‘sea of tonality’ belong, unsurprisingly enough, to the composer’s ‘waterscape’ series. One of these, *Toward the Sea*, may serve as another good illustration of the fact that such tonal dissolutions are not wholly adventitious afterthoughts, but rather constitute the culmination of processes carefully prepared along the ‘Waterways’ preceding them. As suggested above, the tonal goal towards which the whole piece moves is a modal D $\flat$  major/B $\flat$  minor, and this is periodically hinted at throughout the piece by the use of a B $\flat$  minor seventh chord as a kind of reference sonority, or what was referred to above as an *iconic* harmony. However, just as the F $\sharp$  tonality of *Litany*’s second movement was thrown into relief by the interpolation of a middle section focussed on the pitch C $\sharp$ , so here the ‘flat’ tonal world of the ‘home key’ is contrasted with a ‘natural’ one a minor third higher, i.e. a modal F major/D minor, with particular emphasis on the note A $\sharp$ . The first movement, for example, which both begins and ends with the pitch A $\sharp$ , arrives at the ‘iconic’ referential chord, only immediately to contradict the implied tonality by repeating the same material a minor third higher, in the ‘rival’ tonal area; at the end of the piece, a second, more thorough consolidation of the D $\flat$ /B $\flat$  tonality is once again undermined by a final verticalisation of the pentatonic scale beginning on F. In the second movement, there would appear to be an overall tonal movement from the opening C $\sharp$  to C $\sharp$ , but the ‘tonicity’ of the latter is seriously vitiated by the side-slipping ‘Tristan-chords’ for guitar with which the alto-flute’s final note is accompanied. Only in the last movement is the required tonal area definitively established. After a repeat of the ‘consolidatory’ passage from the end of the first movement, there follows a coda which now reinforces rather than undermines its implicit tonality. To a certain extent this is achieved by a reverse of the harmonic process heard at the end of

the first movement; against a transposition of the ubiquitous 'S-E-A' motive in the alto flute with a C $\sharp$  final, the guitar counterpoises first a verticalisation of the pentatonic scale on F, and then a transposition of the same chord down a major third, i.e. into the 'tonic'. In this context the guitar's third chord, whatever its actual theoretical derivation, sounds like an altered IV of D $\flat$  major, and the ear thus accepts the flautist's lingering C $\sharp$ , persisting after the guitarist has damped the chord, as conclusive. The final appearance of the 'iconic' minor seventh chord might appear to contradict this sense of finality, but in fact by this time the ear has become so acclimatised to this particular vertical sonority that, on the contrary, it perfectly fulfils the cadential rôle here demanded of it (Ex. 159).

**Ex. 159: *Toward the Sea* III, conclusion**

A further aspect of Takemitsu's allocation of emphasis to specific pitch classes in preference to others is the manner in which he frequently employs a pitch or pitches so emphasised as a common factor between the end of one section in his music and the beginning of the next. With the progress of his music disrupted as frequently as it is by pauses, *fermatas* and the like, it is clear that this device serves an invaluable function in providing the listener with clear aural connections between what might otherwise seem the disparate 'blocks' of a structure of this type. This phenomenon has come to the attention of other writers on the composer; Dana Wilson<sup>386</sup> observes that not only are the various movements comprising *Coral*

*Island* connected to one another by the use of common pitches of this type, but individual phrases may also be so connected; thus the 'D' at the top of the opening string sonority is picked up subsequently by the piano, passes thence to the violas, becomes the uppermost pitch in the 'cellos and basses, and then passes back to the violas again. Similar processes linking the sectional divisions of Takemitsu's music are to be found throughout his career from the earliest period right up to the works of the final years, too numerous to require the quotation of individual examples here.

There are however one or two examples of such connection by means of pitch association that would appear to warrant special mention. In bar 21 of *November Steps*, for instance, two double basses enter with a long pedal D $\natural$  in harmonics, later to be joined by two more basses sustaining the pitch E $\natural$ . This passage immediately precedes the first entry of the traditional Japanese instruments in the piece, and, as Edward Smaldone has observed, 'The *shakuhachi* enters on D and E, making a strong sonic connection with the orchestral passage.'<sup>387</sup> One could also point out that the semitonally dissonant pitches, the C $\sharp$ 's and D $\sharp$ 's, with which the preceding double pedal is periodically 'smudged' are perhaps intended to prefigure the wavering intonation, the microtonally inflected vibrato, of the ensuing *shakuhachi* entry. In any case, the important point of the gesture is that it forges a rare aural connection between the world of the traditional instrumentalists and that of the Western symphony orchestra – worlds which for the most part during the piece resolutely proclaim their separateness, as the composer himself suggested when he remarked that in this work he 'resolved to blend some intrinsically mismatched instruments in one ensemble so as to reveal, to the extent that I could, their underlying differences.'<sup>388</sup>

Interestingly, a similar type of aural bridge provides one of the few points of connection between the music of the soloists and that of the string orchestra in Takemitsu's 1970 work *Eucalypts I*. There exists a second version of this work, *Eucalypts II* comprising the identical music for the solo instrumentalists as the above version, but minus the string parts<sup>389</sup>; and hearing this, one realises how remark-

<sup>387</sup> Smaldone, op. cit., p. 221

<sup>388</sup> 'Sound in the East, Sound in the West', p. 21

<sup>389</sup> Cf. the similar relationship between *Quatrain I* and *II* (1975)

ably self-sufficient the soloists' music is, how it bears almost as little relationship to what is added in the fuller scoring as the music of the Japanese instrumentalists to the symphony orchestra in *November Steps*. Here, once again, the common emphasis on specific pitches at certain points assumes especial importance as a means of establishing connections between the two otherwise disparate instrumental ensembles. Examples are the C $\sharp$  of the harp at letter B, picked up by 'cellos and basses and sustained in harmonics; the flute's sustained F $\sharp$  in bar 4 of C, picked up by the first violin; and the oboist's low B $\sharp$  in the next bar, which is taken up by the bass. It is as if the device which, in *November Steps*, had assumed the rôle of forging East-West contacts, were here forging similar contacts in a purely West-West context.

### 3.5.5 Conclusions

Certain aspects of the manner in which Takemitsu draws attention to specific pitches in the course of his music suggest possible models that may have exerted their influence upon the composer, although the attribution of Takemitsu's methods to their influence cannot be made with quite the same degree of certainty in this case as in that of some of the composer's other technical devices. While it is hard to think of specific derivations for such compositional commonplaces as the use of pedal points or tonal centres, the projection of large-scale pitch progressions by means of focal pitches has prompted one commentator at least to suggest that this 'particular aspect of the pitch structure ...shares features with the Western atonal tradition and Japanese traditional music.'<sup>390</sup> According to Smaldone, one of the central features of the latter 'is a symmetrical modal hexachord within which nuclear tones are articulated'<sup>391</sup>, and in this music, as in Takemitsu's, 'musical space is articulated through a process of nuclear tones' and 'large-scale pitch-organization is defined by the path between the nuclear tones.'<sup>392</sup> This is held to constitute, in the composer's case, 'an indigenous aspect of pitch-structure which survives the intense Westernization of Japanese twentieth-century culture.'<sup>393</sup>

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<sup>390</sup> Smaldone, op. cit., p. 218

<sup>391</sup> Ibid.

<sup>392</sup> Ibid.

<sup>393</sup> Ibid., p. 225



Takemitsu's linkage of successive sections in his music by means of common pitches also invites comparison with other musics, but here it is Western models that spring most readily to mind. One naturally thinks of the care exercised by certain composers of the Classical tradition in the control over those pitch relationships perceived across the silence separating one movement from the next; in this connection, it may not be superfluous to note that Takemitsu, somewhat bizarrely perhaps, once asserted that

'... when I first came across Western music, I was most moved by Beethoven... even now, I always feel his music resounding in my mind which encourages me somehow very much.'<sup>394</sup>

Here again, however, it is possible tentatively to suggest a model from outside the Western tradition. Takemitsu makes frequent comparison in his writings between the structure of certain of his pieces and that of a traditional Japanese scroll painting; thus *Arc* is described as 'a mobile strongly reminiscent of the Heian period [794-1185] handscroll painting'<sup>395</sup>, and the thirteen sections of *A Flock Descends into the Pentagonal Garden* are 'not variations in the Western sense, rather, like a scroll painting,' so that 'when I composed this piece I made up a story, a picture, like a scroll painting.'<sup>396</sup> Admittedly, as the composer has made clear elsewhere, the aspect of such picture-scrolls which exercises most fascination on him is their eschewal of perspective and a single fixed viewpoint for the percipient, which naturally bears comparison with his own aspirations towards a 'panfocal' instrumental texture.<sup>397</sup> But the above quotation referring to *A Flock Descends* also suggests that Takemitsu is interested in the narrative implications of the pictorial scroll, the fact that it may also be 'read' as a succession of interrelated images, each merging into the next. It is not perhaps wholly fanciful to suggest that the kind of concatenation of individual images one encounters in such a painting, each linked to the next to produce an ongoing, continuous pictorial landscape, might

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<sup>394</sup> Admittedly this was in 1974! See Akimichi, Takeda, 'Contemporary Music and Traditional Japanese Musical Instruments', in: *International Conference on Japanese Studies: Report* (Tōkyō: Japan P.E.N. Club, 1974), p. 182

<sup>395</sup> Takemitsu, transl. Kakudo and Glasow, p. 96

<sup>396</sup> Takemitsu, Cronin and Tann, op. cit., p. 208

<sup>397</sup> Cf. Takemitsu, Tōru, 'My Perception of Time in Traditional Japanese Music' (*Contemporary Music Review*, 1987, Vol. 1), p. 10

bear comparison with the assemblage of individual sections in Takemitsu's music, each linked to the following by means of common pitches, to create an ongoing, continuous musical flow.

## Chapter IV

### Time and space

An intriguing feature of the Japanese language is the identity of certain expressions denoting spatial relationships with those denoting an equivalent temporal relationship. Thus the word for ‘in front of’, *mae*, is the same as the word for ‘before’; the words for ‘behind’ (*ushiro*) and ‘after’ (*ato*), while differently pronounced, employ the same Chinese character; and the expression *kara ... made* can mean either ‘from ... to’ (spatial) or ‘from ... until.’ Similarly, an interval of time is expressed by the same word that is used to express an interval of space, one that has acquired an almost talismanic significance amongst certain scholars of Takemitsu’s music:

‘In the Japanese language, space and time are conceived as a single entity called *ma*.’<sup>398</sup>

It is not, however, the intention of the present discussion to explore the possible philosophical implications of such expressions of the Japanese psyche. Instead, the putative Japanese identification of time and space is exploited here purely for expedient reasons in order to treat of Takemitsu’s explorations in both of these areas conveniently under the same overall heading. With this disclaimer submitted, the discussion will now proceed to various individual aspects of Takemitsu’s handling of the space-time continuum, beginning with his most typical attitudes in the sphere of rhythm and tempo.

#### 4.1 Rhythm and tempo

At first sight, to any reader possessing an acquaintance with Takemitsu’s music however superficial, the idea of an investigation into the composer’s rhythmic methods might seem something of a pointless endeavour. The overriding impression gained from the composer’s music is, for the most part, one of a profound

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<sup>398</sup> Koozin (1990), p. 36

desire to subvert any notion of regular pulse or metrical subdivision, contributing to a fluid, ‘floating’ quality at the opposite pole from the taut rhythmic precision of a composer such as Stravinsky or Messiaen. This desire has been acknowledged specifically by the composer on several occasions; in his programme notes for the *Requiem for Strings*, for instance, Takemitsu says that ‘the work is constructed on a “one by one” rhythm’<sup>399</sup> (without confiding precisely what he means by this English phrase), while his remarks about *Masque* existing in an ‘inner world of time that cannot be grasped by means of Western ideas about metre’ have already been quoted in another context.<sup>400</sup> Such observations embolden Yōko Narazaki to assert that ‘in “Masque”, as in other works from Takemitsu’s early period, liberation from metrical organisation becomes a fundamental concern of the composer’<sup>401</sup>; but for the analyst of Takemitsu’s music, such declarations of independence from the tyranny of metrical organisation invite investigation into the precise mechanisms the composer uses to achieve this feeling of liberation.

One of the most obvious and literal means of overcoming any suggestion of ‘metronomic’ pulse which Takemitsu employs is simply to use tempo values that are at the extreme lower end of, or actually lie outside the range of, those to be found on a conventional metronome. Examples of tempi of such extreme *lento* are found throughout Takemitsu’s music from the eponymous ‘*Rento*’ of his first acknowledged composition onwards, embracing *en route* such sub-metronomic excesses as the ‘Extremely slow, crotchet = 30’ of part of *Autumn*, and ‘whole bar = M.M.20 = 3’’ for the second movement of *Pause Ininterrompue*.<sup>402</sup> This fondness for slow tempi often goes hand in hand with sentiments of an appropriately melancholy or elegiac character; for example, the indication ‘crotchet = 48’ of the first movement of *Pause Ininterrompue* is accompanied by the performance indications *Triste* and *quasi parlando*, translating the evocative title of the movement (‘Slowly, sadly and as if to converse with’) into musical directions with exact fidelity. Takemitsu once remarked in a television interview that Japanese people have no sense

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<sup>399</sup> Akiyama, ‘Saishin Meikyoku Kaisetsu Zenshū’, Vol. 7, p. 459

<sup>400</sup> See above, Section 1.2.

<sup>401</sup> Narazaki, *op. cit.*, p. 99

<sup>402</sup> For all this, the flautist Hiroshi Koizumi, a close acquaintance of Takemitsu, assured the author during a conversation in Tōkyō that the composer habitually found his published metronome markings *too fast* when his works were exposed to the acoustics of the concert-room, and had an unfulfilled plan to return to his scores and revise them *downward*.

of *Allegro*, and certainly his own music lives up to this self-proclaimed national characteristic; Funayama even goes so far as to describe him as ‘the “*lento*” composer.’<sup>403</sup> Such rare exceptions to this rule as the *Allegro con moto* in the second movement of *Litany* only serve to highlight the universality of its confirmation elsewhere; far from expressing any sense of *Allegria*, the mood conveyed by most of Takemitsu’s music is one that has been aptly characterised as ‘grave, intense and [sic] dynamic’<sup>404</sup>, and the composer’s own words also suggest not only a consciousness of this tendency towards *gravitas*, but also a possible explanation for it:

‘This may indeed be a very personal feeling, but the joy of music, ultimately, seems connected with sadness. The sadness is that of existence. The more you are filled with the pure happiness of music making, the deeper the sadness is.’<sup>405</sup>

This was a theme Takemitsu returned to elsewhere; in conversation with Roger Reynolds, for example, he speaks of ‘getting to an age where I gradually understand the sadness and bitterness of life’<sup>406</sup> and comments that ‘all great art is essentially sad.’<sup>407</sup> As Yukiko Sawabe points out, Takemitsu’s oft-quoted adage about the composer ‘giving meaning’ to the ‘stream of sounds’ in the world includes not only the notion of accepting the sounds in the environment, but also that of directly reflecting the spirit of the composer in his rôle of ‘bestower of meaning’, reflecting ‘the spiritual and physical condition of he who himself suffers and mirrors the world which is endured’<sup>408</sup> In Takemitsu’s case, the physical condition – and, one suspects as a result, the spiritual condition also – of the composer was often blighted by ill-health; in addition to the frequent spells of hospitalisation during the ‘fifties, Takemitsu suffered intermittently throughout his life with a collagen disease, about which he spoke in his last interview to the Japanese pianist Noriko Ogawa (cf. Seito and Takemitsu, op. cit., p. 27). One cannot help but draw the inference that

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<sup>403</sup> ‘Takemitsu Tōru Kenkyū Nōto 10’, p. 78

<sup>404</sup> Kanazawa, Masakata: article ‘Takemitsu’ in ‘The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians’, ed. Stanley Sadie (London: Macmillan, 1980), p. 534

<sup>405</sup> Takemitsu, transl. Adachi and Reynolds, op. cit., p. 45

<sup>406</sup> ‘Roger Reynolds and Tōru Takemitsu: a conversation’ *Musical Quarterly* 80/1 (Spring 1996), p. 72

<sup>407</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 75

<sup>408</sup> Sawabe, op. cit., p. 50

this constant endurance of ill-health must have been at least one of the factors contributing to that dignified *pathos* which is such an essential ingredient in the creation of what Japanese critics are wont to refer to as '*Takemitsu tone*.'

A further means employed by the composer in his attempt to liberate the music from rigid metrical organisation is a type of fluidity both in the placing of events on a local, rhythmic level, and in the tempo controlling the overall succession of such placings. It has been observed by Timothy Koozin, for example, that in the second movement of *Pause Ininterrompue* referred to above, the theoretical division into 'bars' of 3" duration does not result in an audible metrical structure, not only because of the extreme slowness, but also on account of the multitude of figures which extend beyond the bar line, and the lack of regular subdivision of the theoretical 3" unit.<sup>409</sup> Takemitsu's 'bars' here may in fact contain anything up to five 'quaver' subdivisions, although the often asynchronous placing of events in the two hands relative to one another suggests that these are to be treated as rough 'proportions' rather than absolute values. Narazaki notes a similar undermining of the basic slow minim beat of *Requiem for Strings* by means of the incorporation of slow triplets which induce 'the feeling of suspension of sounds at the surface level'<sup>410</sup>, while in *Masque* the same commentator discerns several features which suggest the composer's pursuit of rhythmic emancipation: 'the *accelerandi* followed by reversions to the original, extremely slow tempo, the syncopations and divisions of one or two beats into three, and frequent changes of time signature, all subject to progressive transitions to the tempo – these are all embodiments of the idea of rhythm liberated by the removal of any sense of metrical division.'<sup>411</sup> Takemitsu himself has acknowledged this quest for a fluid, non-metrical rhythmic expression; in his programme notes for *November Steps*, he observes that 'Like the music of the *nō* theatre, the rhythm endlessly oscillates.'<sup>412</sup>

An even more radical stance against rigidity of tempo was taken by the composer at Fig. 2 of *Textures*, the first part of *Arc Part II*, where two differing tempi are employed simultaneously. Here a tempo of crotchet = 56 is allocated to group

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<sup>409</sup> Koozin (1988), p. 72

<sup>410</sup> Narazaki, op. cit., p. 88

<sup>411</sup> Ibid., p. 99

<sup>412</sup> Takemitsu (1971), p. 193. Quoted in: Takemitsu, transl. Kakudo and Glasow, op. cit., p. 88

1 of the orchestra, and a tempo of crotchet = 84 to group 2; since the tempi are in a 2:3 ratio to one another, a  $\frac{2}{4}$  bar in the upper system is equivalent to a  $\frac{3}{4}$  bar in the lower, and a  $\frac{4}{4}$  bar to two bars of  $\frac{3}{4}$ . In this particular instance at least, there is clearly a correlation between the spatial (the disposition of the two orchestral groups) and the temporal (the brief allocation of separate metronomic rates of pulse for each); a situation which immediately recalls the similar allocation of differing, but mathematically related tempi for the three spatially separated orchestras of *Gruppen* (although only one conductor appears to be specified in Takemitsu's score to handle such complexities!) The kind of geometrical relationship between whole bars which Takemitsu achieves on a macroscopic level here is perhaps analogous, on a microscopic level, to the geometrical relationship between simultaneous subdivisions of the beat by various factors that one finds elsewhere in the same score. On page 2 of *Pile*, part I of *Arc Part I* for instance, there is a canon for strings in which a gradual 'written-out accelerando' is achieved in the individual voices by the subdivision of the beat into successively smaller values. Since, as a result of the canonic process, a number of such subdivisions occur simultaneously on any given beat, the overall effect achieved is one of a dense and complex polyrhythmic chaos which, despite its inner activity, paradoxically conveys a certain sense of stasis. As Dana Wilson observed of a passage containing similar rhythmic superimpositions in *Garden Rain*, the overall effect is so complex 'that the ear tends to fuse it into a certain homogeneity creating a new sense of stagnation clearly related to the opening, sustained chords.'<sup>413</sup>

Various alternatives to conventional rhythmic notation may also be used as an attempt to free Takemitsu's music from the constraints of orthodox metrical organisation. Reference has already been made to the second movement of *Pause Ininterrompue*, where attacks are placed with considerable freedom inside nominal 'bars' of three seconds' duration; exactly the same method is employed by Takemitsu in *Piano Distance* and the second movement of *Sacrifice*, although in the latter instance the 'bars' are of two seconds' duration (M.M. = 30). A more radical freedom still is granted the performers in the first movement of the latter work, where the only indicators for the placing of events are occasional timings in seconds, and lines indicating the order of succession of entries between

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<sup>413</sup> Wilson, op. cit., p. 207

the various players – a feature which presupposes a high degree of awareness by each player of the material given to the others. This kind of ‘spatial’ notation of musical events became a characteristic feature of certain of the composer’s works in the mid-seventies; the very similar-looking scores of *Waves* and *Bryce* (both written in 1976) dispense with barlines and orthodox rhythmic values, and the former score even dispenses with timings as well, relying on the cues between the players for the succession of events. In parts of *Garden Rain* one finds a related, but apparently unique, form of notation, in which square-headed notes are given durations shown by figures in boxes above them – figures which are to be understood only as relative to one another, with the unit value greater than 1”. The high degree of *rapport* between players necessary successfully to co-ordinate events in scores as freely notated as these is explicitly acknowledged in the score of *Rain Spell*, where all players are instructed to perform from the full score, necessitating much ‘concertina-ing’ of the printed edition in order to render this feasible without impossible page-turns.

The first movement of *Sacrifice* also contains a passage in which all the players are instructed simply to work rapidly through the material entrusted to them during a given time span, with no attempt at co-ordination. Such ‘*senza tempo*’ passages of independent, unsynchronised writing for several players are also a typical feature of Takemitsu’s style. *Coral Island*, for instance, owes much of its character to the contrast between quasi-improvisatory outbursts for wind and tuned percussion notated in this fashion, and a static ‘backdrop’ of sustained harmonies for the strings; while at one point in the score of *Your Love and the Crossing* from *Arc*, the pianist is directed to give signals to various solo instrumentalists, who then work through their allotted material at their own pace – a passage which Akiyama singles out as of especial interest, inasmuch as the conductor’s ‘metronomic tempo’ or ‘clock time’, the pianist’s tempo and the ‘personal tempo’ of the soloists constitute ‘three kinds of musical time’ which are superimposed one upon another.<sup>414</sup> Repetition *ad libitum* of the individual *senza tempo* parts contributing to textures of this kind yields, of course, the familiar ‘mobile’ patterns of much so-called ‘aleatoric’ music, which are also a typical feature of much of Takemitsu’s: the shattering climax of *Asterism*, built up from an accumulation of such ‘mobile’

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<sup>414</sup> ‘Nihon no Sakkyokutachi’, p. 262



patterns against sustained *tremolando* harmonies for the strings and a massive percussion crescendo, is a good example of the powerful uses to which this device may be put.

Of course, despite the impression gained from the above, it would be quite incorrect to assert that at no time does Takemitsu's music project a clearly perceptible, regular pulse. On the contrary, examples can be drawn from Takemitsu's music to illustrate the whole gamut of gradations of pulse-perceptibility: Timothy Koozin even suggests that the appearance of pulse-regularity in Takemitsu's music might be employed to establish the identity of certain ideas, and cites the recurring three-chord motif in even 'quavers' in the second movement of *Pause Ininterrompue* as an example<sup>415</sup>. Takemitsu's music contains many more extreme and persistent uses of regular pulse than this, however, and at the absolute opposite extreme of the spectrum from the 'senza tempo' experiments mentioned above might be located two rather similar-sounding (and similar-looking<sup>416</sup>) scores of the 'sixties, *Valeria* (1965) and *Stanza I* (1969)<sup>417</sup>. In parts of these scores an unusual degree of rhythmic accuracy and ensemble synchronisation is expected of the performers, as Takemitsu creates complex 'pointillist' textures out of the exact rhythmic placing of sharply-defined attacks, in a manner more reminiscent of the contemporary works of Boulez or even Birtwistle than of most of his own music. This is particularly true of *Valeria*, in several sections of which the music moves in a sequence of very fast, even values 'filtered' with rests to create a regularised, 'mechanical' movement – either in rhythmic unison for the whole ensemble, or with the rests staggered to create an overlapping, 'hocket-like' effect. In direct contrast to Takemitsu's expressed aims elsewhere, the use of silence here is remarkably akin to the 'mathematical' placing of rests in Western music which the composer professed to reject<sup>418</sup>; as Wilson comments, this is a 'rare instance of silence [being] used to bring ensemble rhythmic gestures into sharp relief.'<sup>419</sup>

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<sup>415</sup> Koozin (1988), p. 68

<sup>416</sup> The appearance of these two scores, engraved in house style by the flagship of 'avant-garde' music publishing, Universal Edition, in its precision and neatness affords a fascinating contrast with the 'hand-made' look shared by both the 'spatially' notated scores of *Bryce* and *Waves* referred to above.

<sup>417</sup> Despite the later date of *Stanza I*, the two works are more or less contemporaneous in conception, *Stanza I* being a revision for different forces of *Sonant* of 1965

<sup>418</sup> See above, Section 2.5

<sup>419</sup> Wilson, op. cit., p. 129

Similarly, the kind of rhythmic writing illustrated below by the extract from *Dreamtime* (Ex. 160) differs radically from the very fluid treatment of the *tactus* in such works as *Requiem for Strings*. Here there is a very strong sense of a unit pulse (semiquaver), of which the 'syncopated' durations are irregular multiples. There is even a tantalising hint in Takemitsu's writings that, on one occasion at least, such durational values may not be arbitrarily arrived at, but are determined by a kind of numerical 'series.' Speaking of the rhythmic aspect of *A Flock Descends into the Pentagonal Garden*, Akiyama observes that 'various shapes are derived from cells whose rhythmic construction is related to the number five: 3 + 2, 1 + 4, 2 + 3, 4 + 1 ...'<sup>420</sup>, and in his analysis of the work in *Dream and Number*, one of Takemitsu's diagrams hints that the durational values of these cells may be determined by a 'rhythmic construction series' related to another 'magic square' similar to that used to derive the work's pitch materials.<sup>421</sup> Typically, however, there is no explicit explanation in Takemitsu's text here of the compositional process to which the diagram so obviously refers.

The example below from *The Dorian Horizon* (Ex. 161) also suggests a conception of durational values in terms of multiples of the unit pulse (here a quaver), as well as the use of a 'series' of such values which is projected by each successive entry of the 'rhythmic canon.' Here, however, the insistent emphasis on the same monotone in each entry rather suggests that category of rhythmic device which Alban Berg might have designated with the direction *Hauptrhythmus*.

The use of such a constant series of durational values, of course, constitutes a rudimentary example of *isorhythmic* writing, and more fully worked-out examples of this particular species of rhythmic organisation are very occasionally to be found in Takemitsu's scores. At letter E of *Quatrain*, for instance, Takemitsu's complex texture includes three independent lines of ostinati for 'cellos in glissando harmonics, a rhythmic reduction of which is given in Ex. 162. From this it will be readily be seen that the temporal placing of the beginnings and endings of these *glissandi* is in each part regulated by a simple *talea*, albeit expressed in different unit values in each part: the two outer parts simply employing alternating values

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<sup>420</sup> Akiyama, 'Saishin Meikyoku Zenshū' Vol. 7, p. 471

<sup>421</sup> Takemitsu's diagram is reproduced in: Reynolds and Takemitsu, op. cit., p. 67



Ex. 160: *Dreamtime*, letter M, b. 4ff.

of three and five times the basic unit, the middle part alternating values of two and three.

A slightly more complex example of isorhythmic writing is afforded by Ex. 163, from *Rain Spell*. Here a pattern, in three even durational values, for the vibraphone (1) is at first counterpointed against similarly constructed patterns of five durations for the flute (3) and six durations for the clarinet (5); but roughly halfway through the passage the three instruments each change to different isorhythmic patterns – the clarinet adopting the vibraphone's rhythmic ostinato, the flute playing essentially the same pattern a beat earlier (4), and the vibraphone switching to a new pattern of four durational values (2). Takemitsu's musical directions for this passage – '... all notes must be counted evenly on the beat' – bear testimony to

S.P.

S.P.

S.P.

*fp* simile

*fp* simile

*fp*

*fp* *fp* *fp* *fp* simile *fp*

Ex. 161: *The Dorian Horizon*, b. 128ff. (Vln. 2-4 of 9 'echoes')

the rather atypical emphasis on rhythmic precision required by the composer to achieve his desired effect.

1 1 (etc.)

2 2 (etc.)

3 3 3 4 4 (etc.)

5 5 1 1 (etc.)

Vib.

Fl.

Cla.

Ex. 163: *Rain Spell*, p. 6, system 2 (extract)

Another respect in which this example is slightly more complex than the preceding one is in the use of genuine melodic patterns for the three instruments,



Ex. 162: *Quatrain*, letter E, rhythmic reduction of 'cello parts

rather than the simple repeated *glissandi* of the previous example. These melodic patterns are, however, not in themselves controlled with the same degree of rigour as that which is applied to the durational values; they do not, in other words, provide a *color* to mesh with the repeated *talea*. For examples of this type of melodic organisation, one must turn to a consideration of the whole question of Takemitsu's repetition of melodic formulæ, or use of *ostinato*, which will form the matter for the discussion which follows.

## 4.2 Ostinati and heterocyclic writing

Consisting as it does of the cyclic repetition of a series of pitches (or harmonies), the device of *ostinato* qualifies for consideration under the temporal aspect of Takemitsu's music, although it is of course an aspect of melodic practice as well. Takemitsu makes use of the device as early as the second movement of *Futatsu no Rento* (as revealed by bb. 18 and 45 of *Litany*), and it continues to be encountered during each of the subsequent phases of his career. Towards the end of *Coral Island*,

for instance, it takes on the very specific form of a *basso ostinato*, over whose ‘ground bass’ (Ex. 164<sup>422</sup>) other figures are also arranged in recurring cycles: a 2-bar ostinato for the bells, a 1-bar ostinato for crotales, and a 1-bar repeated pattern for strings, alto flute, celesta and marimba, the delicious, ‘crystalline’ orchestral effect of which is no doubt intended to depict the ‘transparent coral island’ of the text.



Ex. 164: *Coral Island*, Poem II, recurring bass ostinato

Wilson<sup>423</sup> suggests that, since Takemitsu’s music seldom projects a sense of pulse, this employment of a slow, deliberate ostinato may create a sense of ‘arrival’ for the listener. His argument perhaps gains weight when one considers a similar effect which obtains in the much later score of *Entre-temps* (1986), where the strings repeat a one-bar ostinato four times in bb. 126-129 while the oboe has its own independent material. The stasis here clearly functions as a signifier of the imminent closure of the work, which indeed follows only a few bars later.

Closely related to the concept of *ostinato* are the kinds of repeated melodic patterns, or ‘mobiles’, to which brief reference was made in the preceding section when discussing Takemitsu’s ‘senza tempo’ writing for various instruments, and which are such a typical feature of certain of the composer’s scores from the early ‘sixties onwards. Takemitsu’s own preferred term for the manner in which the dissimilar periodicities of the various melodic cycles constituting such a texture create ever-changing relationships with one another is taken from the unlikely field of molecular chemistry:

(With reference to the constituents of the texture in the orchestral work *Arc*) ‘...Grass and flowers, a group of undetermined soloistic, rapidly changing

<sup>422</sup> This figure is anticipated earlier in the score, p. 28, b. 1

<sup>423</sup> Op. cit., p. 90

mobile forms. These solo parts recur in heterocyclic time relation.<sup>424</sup>

‘These varying time cycles [in *Arc*] contain what could be called heterocyclic relationship.’<sup>425</sup>

It is perhaps justifiable to extend Takemitsu’s concept of ‘heterocyclicality’ to include similar relationships between melodic cycles of dissimilar lengths in an orthodox metrical context. An example of the type of relationship here referred to has in fact already been quoted elsewhere; in bar 40 of *Rain Tree Sketch*<sup>426</sup>, the right hand is given an *ostinato* of ten even semiquavers, the left hand one of eight semiquavers. As Koozin points out, ‘Since patterns in the upper and lower scores are of unequal length, the patterns overlap irregularly’<sup>427</sup>. A slightly different situation obtains in Ex. 165, from *Rain Tree*. Here the ostinati for both marimbas are identical in length and pitch-content, and distinguished only by the irregular placing of *sforzandi*; the discrepancy between the cycles of repetition in the two parts here arises from discrepancies between the number of repetitions of *whole bars* of each variant accentuation. The economy of the notation which Takemitsu devises for this, the ambiguity as to the placing of the downbeat created by the offbeat *sforzandi*, the choice of instruments and, of course, the repetition itself all suggest an acquaintance with other contemporary music for ‘mallet instruments’ from across the Pacific.



Ex. 165: *Rain Tree*, p. 13, system 4

In each of the examples of *ostinato* referred to above, both the pitches and rhythmic values of the original melodic formula have been rotated together as an

<sup>424</sup> Takemitsu, transl. Kakudo and Glasow, op. cit., p. 95

<sup>425</sup> Ibid., p. 124

<sup>426</sup> Quoted above, Section 3.1.6, Ex. 91

<sup>427</sup> Koozin (1988), p. 269

indissoluble unit in the course of repetition. There exist examples in Takemitsu's music, however, where a cyclical sequence of pitches may be repeated independently of the durational values by which it is expressed: in other words, of something resembling the *color* of isorhythmic construction. These durational values may, by contrast with the repeated melodic line, follow their own cyclical rationale, or no rationale at all. In one unique instance known to the present writer, repetitions of such a *color* are actually combined with repetitions of what in the previous section was referred to as a *talea*, the differing lengths of the two elements giving rise to the classic isorhythmic structure.

This occurs at letter A of *Autumn*, in a densely-textured passage which, as Smaldone notes, is 'organised by a complex procedure of transposition, ordering and transformation, which governs the nineteen individual string parts.'<sup>428</sup> Six of these constituent voices are involved in the working out of a four-part and two-part canonic process. Beneath them are four more independent 'layers' of music for the lower strings, comprising either unison melodic lines, or block harmonies moving in rhythmic unison within the layer. All of these layers make use of cyclic repetition of pitches or harmonies; for example, the uppermost layer (Vln. I, desks 3-14 and Vln. II, desks 3-12) begins by repeating a series of eleven three-note chords, and then switches to another cycle of eight chords which is repeated three times before being truncated first to five, then to three harmonies. But the rhythmic presentation of this material demonstrates no corresponding logical organisation, and the same holds true for all but the lowest strand in the texture, the music for 'cellos 1-6 (Ex. 166). Here a repeating cycle of eight chords is presented in rhythmic values determined by a cycle of nine durational values, the dissimilar lengths of the two cycles guaranteeing differing combinations of harmony and rhythm at each repetition. The uniqueness of this instance in Takemitsu's output throws into sharp relief the 'freedom' with which he makes use of such technical devices elsewhere, as indeed in the other voices at this point in the score.

### 4.3 Spatial disposition of forces; theatrical aspect of works

During the apogee of *avant-garde* experimentation in the 'sixties and 'seventies, it was almost *de rigueur* for composers to re-invent the orchestra with each

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<sup>428</sup> Smaldone, op. cit., p. 224



"Talea"

"Color"

Ex. 166: *Autumn*, letter A, 'cellos 1-6

successive work they wrote, either by means of a rearrangement of the disposition of conventional forces, or by the invention of new 'designer ensembles' of their own. Particular care was often given to the spatial arrangement of such an instrumental apparatus, with composers including diagrammatic representations in the score of the relative placing of performers on the concert platform. Takemitsu was clearly sympathetic to the idea that the spatial dimension could become available to the composer as a manipulable resource, as is indicated by his programme notes for the 'Space Theatre' at Expo '70 in Osaka, of which he was director, and for which he composed *Crossing* for four soloists, female voices and two orchestras:<sup>429</sup>

'The conventionally arranged space of most halls initiates no movement,

<sup>429</sup> The sound system in the hall comprised a total of 1,000 loudspeakers, many of which could be moved either by hand or by electric power, and through this system recordings of Takemitsu's work, and of works by Takahashi and Xenakis, were relayed to the accompaniment of a laser-beam show. See: Funayama, 'Takemitsu Tōru Kenkyū Nōto' (Nos. 7 and 8) for more details

brings about no human experience (spatial or temporal) as a qualitative experience, and is a standardised, provisional thing...Departing from the standard placement of former instruments, a free sound source has become established, and the information supply has become pluralistic. Spatiality and spatial timbre – the temporal textures of musical images – have been added as important parameters in the construction of music.’<sup>430</sup>

Takemitsu’s explorations of the spatial dimension of instrumental music began at least as early as his *Coral Island* of 1962 – only his second published orchestral work – in which he boldly re-seated the conventional orchestral apparatus, dividing it into six instrumental groups and including precise directions as to their relative placing. Although the actual result in this instance is not as radically different from traditional orchestral seating as the above may suggest, it does have one psychologically important effect on the layout of the written score, inasmuch as the division into groups suggests a certain kind of antiphonal instrumentation, while a more orthodox ‘orchestration’ in terms of homogeneous groups actually involves a conscious effort of the composer to override the implicit patterns suggested by the score layout. As was seen earlier, this typically gives rise to the type of texture in which ‘blocks’ of sound from the various instrumental groups are juxtaposed against one another, with the strings involved in providing a sustained harmonic ‘backdrop’<sup>431</sup>. Significantly, in those passages where Takemitsu does require a homogeneity of orchestral sound, as in the two ‘Poem’ movements, the sixfold division of the orchestra is, on paper at least, temporarily abandoned.

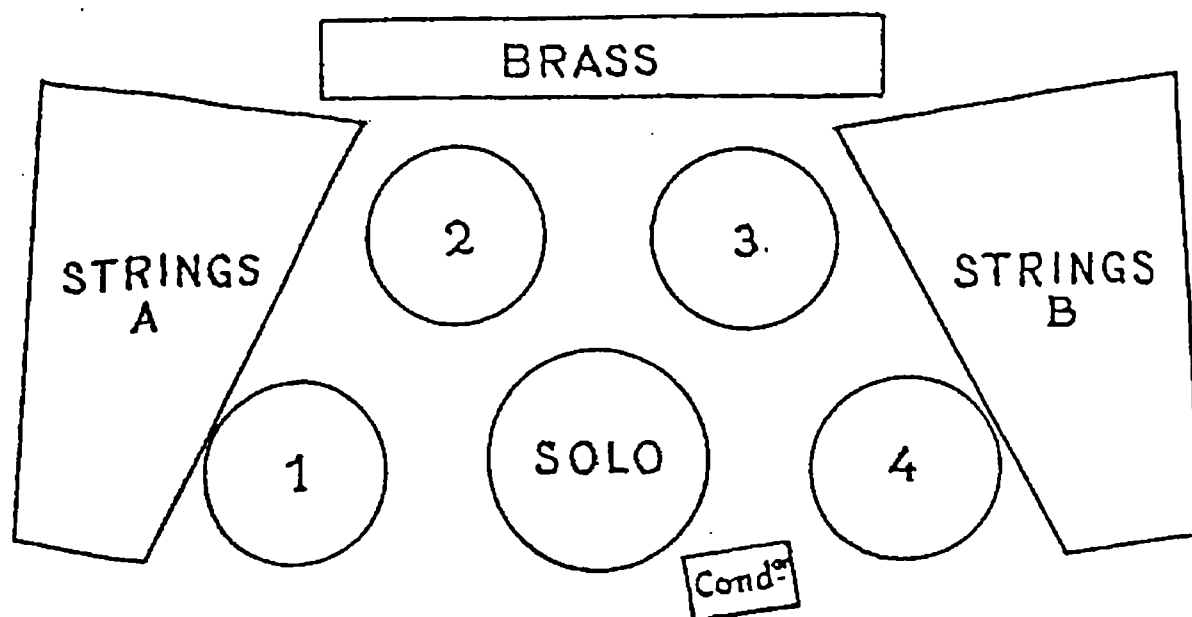
Similar rearrangements of orchestral forces are to be found in other ‘mid-period’ Takemitsu scores such as the *Arc* series and *November Steps*, in which latter Takemitsu effects changes to the line-up of the orchestral ensemble as well, limiting the instrumental forces to two groups each of strings, percussion and harp placed to left and right of the stage, with oboes, clarinets, trumpets and trombones placed centre stage and to the rear. In *Cassiopeia* (1971), the configuration of stars in the eponymous constellation is apparently reflected in the positioning of instrumental forces: ‘The five stars forming a W (or M when seen above the pole in December) is the position in which Takemitsu places the solo percussionist and the four

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<sup>430</sup> Quoted in Wilson, op. cit., pp. 44-45

<sup>431</sup> See above, Section 4.1

groups of instrumental soloists. The many clusters of nebulae surrounding them are represented by one brass and two string sections'<sup>432</sup> (Ex. 167).



Ex. 167: *Cassiopeia*, layout of instrumental forces (from preface to score)

Such experimentation in the handling of instrumental forces seems for the most part to have been abandoned in the orchestral scores of Takemitsu's later years, which are, by and large, scored for conventionally seated and constituted ensembles, and would present no problems for the concert promoter wishing to programme them alongside works of Debussy or Mahler. This may perhaps be seen as a reflection of Takemitsu's increasing accommodation with both the musical public, and with the establishment which serves it, during those years. At the same time, however, the occasional appearance in these last years of works such as *From Me Flows What You Call Time* (1992), for symphony orchestra and five percussionists who operate distant bells distributed about the auditorium by means of lengths of coloured tape, proves that the apparently mellowed elder Takemitsu was still capable of pulling a few surprises.

<sup>432</sup> Sleeve notes for Q4 EMD 5508

The spatial dimension of the above work illustrates an important aspect of Takemitsu's experimentation in this vein, namely that the rearrangement of instrumental forces may be designed not simply to achieve a situation whereby sounds reach the listener from a variety of *directions*, but also one in which they occur at various *distances* both from the listener and each other. In *The Dorian Horizon*, for instance, the string soloists are divided into two groups labelled 'eight harmonic pitches' and, behind them, 'nine echoes'; and, according to the diagram in the preface to the score, 'Nine echoes and eight harmonic pitches are placed between as far as possible' [sic]. As Mahler had discovered many years previously, this physical separation can have the additional effect of distorting the dynamics in the score; just as the offstage musicians in *Das klagende Lied* are placed in such a manner that they, though playing *ff*, 'nur *p* gehört werden können', so in *The Dorian Horizon* 'the dynamic "forte" has different meanings for each group.'<sup>433</sup> An arrangement of forces similar to that of the above work is also adopted in *Garden Rain*, where the second brass group is placed behind the first on the concert platform; while in *Waves* the two trombonists are directed to stand at either side of the stage, with the other instrumentalists disposed at various points in between. The most explicit acknowledgement of this attempt to create a kind of spatial 'perspective', however, is the title of the 1972 work *Distance*, for oboe and *shō*, with the latter once again in front of the former and, according to the performance directions, a 'long distance' between them. As Ohtake notes, the title 'refers to the distance between the oboe and *shō* as well as the extreme distances of the intervals, dynamics and articulation'<sup>434</sup>, and Takemitsu himself has described the effect he wished to create by means of this arrangement: 'The oboe plays a phrase, stops, and the sound continues in the distant *shō*. The movement of sound gives a fresh experience of space.'<sup>435</sup>

The effect of such a conscious 'staging' of the instrumental forces can, of course, be highly theatrical, and in several instances Takemitsu's directions for performance go further than the mere specification of relative spatial positioning, giving directions for gesture, movement and even speech which turn the act of performance itself into a kind of instrumental theatre. The various sections of

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<sup>433</sup> Ogawa, op. cit., p. 114

<sup>434</sup> Ohtake, op. cit., p. 59

<sup>435</sup> Takemitsu, transl. Kakudo and Glasow, op. cit., p. 117

*Cassiopeia*, for instance, bear the titles *Entrance-Scene-Solo-Scene*, and when after an orchestral ‘prelude’ the solo percussionist appears on the platform he ‘is suggested to walk (or running) to the regular place yo [sic] perform, and play castanets intermittently as Spanish dancer (or Kabuki actor) while his [sic] walks.’ Elsewhere in Takemitsu’s music, a theatrical quality is lent to instrumental performance by requiring players to branch out into verbal declamation; in *Eclipse* for instance, Takemitsu’s first work for *shakuhachi* and *biwa*, the performers are instructed to intone a verse from the poem *Gitimalya* by Rabindranath Tagore, while the solo flautist in *Voice* struggles between phrases to utter, first in French and then in English, verses by the surrealist poet Shūzo Takiguchi – the following lines of whose work also figure in the large scale work *Gémeaux* (1971-86), recited in French through their mouthpieces by six horn players and four trombonists:

*Your eyes, your hands, your breasts ...*

*You are twins in yourself.*<sup>436</sup>

Finally, as well as involving players in physical movement, gesture, and speech, Takemitsu in *Rain Tree* contrives to create a little drama without calling on the aid of visible human performers at all. Each of the three percussion soloists is lit from above by a spotlight, and detailed instructions are given in the score as to when these lights are to be switched on and off. The elaborate ‘lightshow’ which results, in combination with the scattered, ‘raindrop’ sounds for tuned percussion, is perhaps intended to reflect the descriptive associations of the work’s title, referring as it does to the Hawaian tree observed by Kenzaburo Ōe, which ‘continues to let fall rain drops collected from last night’s shower until well after the following midday....What an ingenious tree, isn’t it?’<sup>437</sup>

## 4.4 Conclusions

Takemitsu’s assertion that the Japanese have no ‘sense of *Allegro*’ is hardly borne out when one takes into view the whole gamut of traditional musics in that country, which includes, for example, numerous spritely folk songs. Nevertheless,

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<sup>436</sup> From *Tezukuri Kotowaza* (‘Handmade Proverbs’); Takemitsu also made a setting of this text for six male voices in his 1987 work of the same title

<sup>437</sup> From Ōe’s novel ‘Atama no ii, Ame no Ki,’ quoted in preface to score

many in the West might agree with Roger Reynolds' assertion that 'traditional Japanese art, theatre in particular, employs a deliberateness of pace that is often remarked upon by weary Western observers'<sup>438</sup>, and one or two traditional Japanese genres in particular are famed both for an extremely leisurely pace of movement, and a certain grave dignity of expression: the recitative-like narrations of *heikebiwa*, for example, and – perhaps best known to 'weary Westerners' – the awesomely slow *nō* dramas, one of which, attended by Stravinsky and Robert Craft in Ōsaka, was famously described by the latter as an 'oriental *opera seria*, slower than *Parsifal*.'<sup>439</sup> Takemitsu's characteristic *gravitas* is thus very much in accord with the mood of certain, more serious genres of Japanese traditional music – as too is his fluidity of *tactus*, the resemblance of which to traditional Japanese practice is acknowledged in the composer's own comparison, already quoted,<sup>440</sup> between the 'endlessly oscillating' music of the *nō* theatre and the rhythm of *November Steps*. However, at the same time, the extremes of slowness expressed by some of Takemitsu's tempo indications also suggest comparison with the similarly audacious extremes sometimes required by Olivier Messiaen. This is particularly striking in those early scores in which Takemitsu uses the French language; an indication such as 'Lent extrême, crotchet=38' from the beginning of *Masque* could almost have strayed there from the *Quatuor pour la Fin du Temps*.

Any possible sources of influence on the notational means Takemitsu employs to achieve his rhythmic goals, however, are to be found solely within the Western tradition. The name of Messiaen springs once again to mind when considering the layout of such keyboard scores as the first movement of *Pause Ininterrompue* and the *Rain Tree Sketch*, in both of which 'bars' of uneven duration, and sometimes of considerable length, are separated by solid and dotted bar-lines. The 'proportional' notation using nominal 'bars' of fixed length, or intermittent timings in seconds, found elsewhere in Takemitsu's music, however, most strongly suggests the example of Luciano Berio: parts of certain scores, such as *Sacrifice*, even *look* like the type of thing to be found in the *Sequenze*. Berio is also one possible source

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<sup>438</sup> Reynolds, Roger: 'A Jostled Silence: Contemporary Japanese Musical Thought (Part One)'; introduction. *Perspectives of New Music* XXX/1 (1992), p. 34

<sup>439</sup> Stravinsky and Craft, op. cit., p. 198

<sup>440</sup> See above, Section 4.1

of influence for the *senza tempo* 'mobile' passages which Takemitsu uses in certain works, although here a number of other composers also suggest themselves as models – most obviously Lutosławski, to whose memory Takemitsu did, after all, dedicate his *Paths* of 1994. Finally, there are one or two of the composer's innovations in this sphere which would appear to be entirely his own invention – the square-headed notes in *Garden Rain*, to which reference was made above<sup>441</sup> being a case in point.

In those works from around the period in which *Valeria* was written, where the composer does use a rigid metre and clearly perceptible pulse, the sound-world evoked is rather Boulezian, the above work in particular recalling the rhythmic exactitude and regularity of the *Commentaires I & II de "Bourreaux de solitude"* in *Le Marteau sans Maître* – as well as, rather curiously, some of the 'mechanicæ perpetuum' effects of Birtwistle, although the latter's experiments in this vein actually postdate Takemitsu's 1965 work. Passages such as that quoted in Ex. 160<sup>442</sup>, however, based on arithmetical multiplication of an implied unit value, strongly suggest the influence of Messiaen's rhythmic theories, and it is perhaps hardly surprising that similar passages occur in the heavily Messiaen-influenced *Quatrain* of 1975.<sup>443</sup> Further suggestion of Messiaenic influence on Takemitsu's rhythmic procedures could perhaps also be implied by p. 13, system 2 of *Rain Tree*, where Jeong Woo Jin has cleverly detected the presence of a Messiaen-like 'non-retrogradable rhythm' in the vibraphone part.<sup>444</sup>

Despite the distinct possibility, already hinted at, that the kind of marimba figurations shown in Ex. 165 from *Rain Tree* might constitute a kind of 'self-portrait with Reich and Riley', by and large the use of *ostinato* in Takemitsu's music suggests comparisons not with American minimalism, but with the frequent use of the device by composers of the Second Viennese School, especially in their pre-serial, 'free atonal' phase. The *ostinato crescendo* at letter N of *Vers, l'arc-en-ciel, Palma*, for instance, strongly evokes the famous opening of the first of Berg's *Altenberg Lieder*; another, very similar passage occurs in *Orion and Pleiades* and has already

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<sup>441</sup> See section 4.1

<sup>442</sup> Section 4.1

<sup>443</sup> E.g. p. 25, b. 1

<sup>444</sup> See: Jin, op. cit., p. 21

been quoted in another context<sup>445</sup>. The source of Takemitsu's occasional experiments with quasi-isorhythmic rotations of durations and, occasionally, pitches can be identified with even more certitude: despite the medieval connotations of the terms *talea* and *color*, the device has clearly been transmitted to the composer via the *Technique de mon langage musical* of Messiaen, with which, it has been noted, Takemitsu was certainly familiar. What is interesting to note, however, is the contrast between Messiaen's almost alchemical fascination with these arithmetic productions, and Takemitsu's lack of interest in allowing the mechanisms so constructed to pursue their predetermined courses. Thus, while the pattern quoted from *Autumn* above clearly follows the same procedures as the famous piano part in the *Liturgie de cristal*, Takemitsu, unlike Messiaen, shows no interest in pursuing its workings for longer than a few bars. Furthermore, the fact that in the other 'isomelodic' strands in this texture the *color* is changed after a couple of repetitions, and allied to arbitrary series of durations – and, indeed, the general isolated nature of this instance in Takemitsu's output – all point to Takemitsu's temperamental disinclination for the strict application of such 'constructivist' procedures.

Takemitsu's rearrangements of instrumental forces clearly relate to the similar imperatives felt by Western composers such as Stockhausen and Berio to include spatial relationships in the list of parameters subject to compositional control. Like Stockhausen too, Takemitsu may have been influenced by his experiments in the electronic studio in this respect. On the other hand, traditional Japanese theatre has also been suggested as a possible source of influence for at least one of Takemitsu's spatial experiments: Wilson notes that the possible influence of the on-stage, antiphonal arrangement of instrumentalists in the *kabuki* drama on the platform layout of *Cassiopeia* 'cannot be underestimated.'<sup>446</sup> Furthermore, the specific reference to *kabuki* in the composer's 'stage directions' for the percussionist's first entrance prompts Wilson to suggest that the 'nature and thrust' of the work are akin to a work from that dramatic repertoire, in particular *Memiji Gari*, in which there is a similar mounting of tension 'without a sense of climax, or with several small-scale climaxes.' A similar comparison between the 'theatricality' of

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<sup>445</sup> See above, Section 2.3, Ex. 29

<sup>446</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 142



Takemitsu's presentation and another form of traditional Japanese theatre is suggested by Ohtake in her remarks on *Masque*, whose title, she asserts, derives from the female mask worn by the principal actor in a *nō* performance, and whose indebtedness to that genre is further indicated by the fact that the two flautists are required to exclaim syllables such as 'yio' and 'huh', 'as do the instrumentalists in Noh plays.'<sup>447</sup> Unfortunately, there would appear to be no evidence to support this latter claim in the printed score, but similar vocalisations do occur in other Takemitsu works<sup>448</sup>, so that Ohtake's suggestion of a *nō* influence is perhaps still a valid one.

At the same time, of course, the extension of instrumentalists' resources by the inclusion of vocalisation was also a preoccupation of several of Takemitsu's Western contemporaries – hearing the flautist's whispered exclamations of '*Qui va la?*' in *Voice*, for example, one cannot help but be irresistably reminded of the trombonist's interjections of '*Why?*' in the Berio *Sequenza V*. Once again, it appears that whatever Takemitsu drew upon from traditional Japanese theatrical practice for his own purposes, was also exactly attuned to certain contemporary preoccupations of his colleagues in the West.

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<sup>447</sup> Ohtake, op. cit., p. 59

<sup>448</sup> E.g. in *Stanza I*, where each of the players in turn utters the syllable 'yeah!'

## Chapter V

### Texture

The vital rôle played by the handling of texture in Takemitsu's compositional language has been implicitly acknowledged by the composer himself in the title of *Textures* for piano and orchestra (1964), the first part of *Arc Part II*. It has also received due attention from several writers on the composer, not least of course Dana Richard Wilson, to whose thesis on precisely this aspect of the composer's music reference has so frequently been made in these pages. Indeed, so exhaustive is Wilson's treatment of the subject that any similarly thorough investigation here would almost certainly constitute mere reduplication; for this reason, therefore, only the barest, salient points of the matter are dealt with in the remarks which follow.

#### 5.1 Textural contrast; delineation of form by means of texture

An important aspect of the careful regard for texture which is part of Takemitsu's compositional manner is his use of differing textures as a tool to provide contrasts which, consistently applied, elevates such contrasts to the level of a structural element in the composition. An example of this may be found in the three movements which comprise one of Takemitsu's earliest published scores, the *Pause Ininterrompue* of 1952-9. The first movement of this work uses a kind of 'homophonic' texture in which the melodic line appears as the upper voice in a sequence of homorhythmic chords, rather in the manner of much of Messiaen's music. By contrast, the final movement opts for a hierarchical or 'melody and accompaniment' texture, with an upper melodic line in long notes supported by sporadic chords. In between, the second of the three movements has a different texture yet again, built for the most part from simultaneous, chordal attacks like the first movement, but with these attacks now separated in time and register from one another, so that no overall melodic shapes or extended phrases emerge. Yōko Narazaki makes great claims for this textural variety, noting that, although the work makes use

of 'clusters of chords'<sup>449</sup> in the manner of Messiaen, 'in contrast to Messiaen, who uses his "clusters of chords" almost always according to the same pattern of textural types, Takemitsu, by making changes to the texture, transforms the latter into a structural element.'<sup>450</sup> Although the invidious comparison with Messiaen is perhaps a little exaggerated here, the central point is a valid one – that contrast of texture in Takemitsu may furnish a means of emphasising formal divisions both between movements and within them, and that delineation of form by such methods is a quite original contribution to the musical language, one which a Western ear – unused to compositional subtleties in this area – is perhaps inclined to miss.

The textural types described in the above example – melody plus accompaniment, and homophony – represent simple and very traditional models of presenting polyphonic materials. As the years progressed, however, and Takemitsu's style developed, the range of textural types available to the composer increased, and with this, the possibilities for contrast between them. In the first movement of *Masque*, for instance, the two flautists have considerable independence, almost never sharing a synchronous attack; and this, in combination with the large intervallic leaps, *bravura* flourishes and dissonant harmonic language contributes towards the creation of a disjointed, fragmentary texture which is very much in accord with other music from the work's epoch. By way of contrast, however, the two flutes are in the second movement treated much more as one unit; there are not only several simultaneous attacks for the two players, but passages in which they play in rhythmic unison. This, in combination with the clear segmentation of the movement into phrases by means of frequent rests, fewer intervallic leaps and an increased dependence on the octatonic mode in contrast to the first movement's chromaticism, creates a much less abrasive textural type which forms an effective foil to the first movement's '*pointillisme*'.

The range of textural possibilities available to the composer had still further expanded by the time of *Coral Island*. As previously noted, the orchestra for this work is divided into six independent groups, but in certain sections of the score this division is abandoned, on paper at least, in favour of a more conventional

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<sup>449</sup> The reference, it would appear, is to Messiaen's 'Technique de mon langage musical'; cf. English edition (Paris: Leduc, 1944), p. 51

<sup>450</sup> Narazaki, op. cit, p. 88

score layout. These notational changes correspond to differences in the type of texture the orchestra is being used to project. In the passages notated in 'conventional' layout (the two *Poème* movements), the various instrumental groups interact freely to create 'pointillistic' textures, *Klangfarbenmelodie* or even conventional ensemble, as in the 'chaconne' referred to above<sup>451</sup>. In those sections in which the division into groups is respected by the score layout, however (the three *Accumulation* movements), for the most part a stratified texture results from the superimposition of the groups, each of which has a clearly defined and consistent instrumental rôle: the strings providing sustained background harmonies, the tuned percussion washes of tintinnabulatory colour, the brass disjointed, 'pointillistic' utterances, and the woodwind quasi-aleatoric 'mobile' passages. Since the complete *Coral Island* is an interleaved structure comprising three *Accumulation* movements alternating with the two *Poèmes*, these changes in the texture clearly point up the global five-part scheme. But on a local level, too, the handling of texture may serve the interests of formal relationships. The *Accumulation* referred to in the titles of the odd-numbered movements is, as Wilson expresses it, 'a textural event'<sup>452</sup>, and thus texture here helps shape the overall direction of individual movements. At the same time, since the overall plan of the work is arch-shaped, with literal repeats in retrograde scattered throughout the work<sup>453</sup>, the gradual accumulation of the opening is balanced by a corresponding attenuation of texture at the close, clearly and audibly pointing up the 'palindromic' structure by textural means.

While Takemitsu's involvement with 'experimental' types of instrumental texture continued throughout the 'sixties and the earlier part of the 'seventies, in his later years his interest in the typically 'avant-garde' textural types of that epoch – *pointillisme*, clusters, densely divided string 'micropolyphony' – appears to have waned as part of the general revision of musical language that informed his 'third period.' Here the types of textures employed increasingly conform more readily to the traditional models, such as homophony or melody plus accompaniment, that Takemitsu had used at the very beginning of his career. An immediately striking feature of almost any of the later orchestral scores is the extent to which, on almost

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<sup>451</sup> See Section 4.2

<sup>452</sup> Wilson, op. cit., p. 102

<sup>453</sup> See Section 2.3, Fig. 6

every page, the full orchestral apparatus appears, even if the contribution of some instruments on that page is minimal; Takemitsu seems now more concerned with using his vast array of instrumentalists to add dashes of colour by taking turns to double the pitches of a core musical idea, than to effect the kind of contrasts of instrumental groupings and placings seen in previous works. To be sure, there is still textural contrast: passages of uniform orchestration versus stratified instrumental texture, for instance, or of homophony versus other polyphonic types. But the general impression of a simplified textural presentation, in which the essential musical ideas are thickened by sensuous instrumental doublings, contrasts strongly with the much denser layerings of the composer's preceding years; and this aspect of the music, like so many other facets of the composer's later manner, is much closer in spirit to the textural practices of the later Romantic or so-called 'Impressionist' composers than to the preoccupations of the composer's own middle years.

## 5.2 Conclusions

Narazaki may, perhaps, be correct to suggest that Takemitsu's use of textural contrast as a formal delineator constitutes his own original contribution to compositional technique. On the other hand, it is certainly possible to suggest composers who might have exerted an influence on those specific types of texture which have found favour with Takemitsu over the years. The name of Messiaen, for example, has already been suggested in connection with that type of dissonantly homophonic writing in which the melodic line appears as the upper part, as found in the first movement of *Pause Ininterrompue*. The fragmented *pointillisme* of such works as the first movement of *Masque* suggests comparisons with the work of any number of Western composers of its time, of course, while the gentler, sparser mood of its precursor in the music of Anton Webern is evoked by such works as Takemitsu's *Piano Distance* of 1961, with its lean texture and precisely notated dynamics and pedalling. Elsewhere in this thesis, comparisons have also been drawn between the densely 'micropolyphonic' or sustained cluster writing for strings in certain Takemitsu works and the scores of György Ligeti, a comparison which has also suggested itself to certain other writers on the subject:

'Wind and percussion instrumental sounds accumulate and envelop string

sonorities that softly and gradually develop into dense vertical textures, not unlike the building block structures that are typical of Penderecki's and Ligeti's music.<sup>454</sup>

Passing reference has also been made in another section<sup>455</sup> to Takemitsu's 'stratification' of musical texture, and here again the influences to which this was ascribed were of Western origin, as the composer himself corroborated with his reference to the 'pan-focal' textures in the works of Debussy (one might also point to the similar layering of texture in certain of the more grandiose scores of Alban Berg, such as *Reigen* in the *Three Orchestral Pieces*). In another context, however, Takemitsu suggests that this concept of a plurality of textural foci may be, if not exactly the result of direct Oriental influence, then at the very least in possession of a close analogue in another area of traditional Oriental art: the Japanese scroll painting. Reference has already been made to this in connection with the another aspect of Takemitsu's compositional technique<sup>456</sup>, and on that occasion the suggested relationship was rather speculative in character. For other analogies which might be drawn between the specific attributes of the scroll painting and musical processes, however, there is more certain evidence. Takemitsu specifically draws attention to the relationship between the temporally shifting viewpoint needed to 'take in' the contents of such a scroll and the similar viewpoint needed to assimilate the temporal evolution of timbre in *My Perception of Time in Traditional Japanese Music*<sup>457</sup>, and, elsewhere, his remarks also suggest that the picture-scroll was for him a metaphor for the 'multiply focussed musical garden'<sup>458</sup> of works such as *Arc*, where 'by allowing the solo piano to stroll through the garden with changing viewpoints, the piece is freed from a set frame' and becomes – as already observed in another context<sup>459</sup> – 'a mobile strongly reminiscent of the Heian Period [794-1185] handscroll painting.'<sup>460</sup> The implication here is that the art of the traditional Japanese garden, and of the picture scroll with its constantly shifting viewpoint

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<sup>454</sup> Robin Julian Heifetz, referring to *Coral Island* in: 'Post-World War II Japanese Composition' (D.M.A. Thesis, University of Illinois, 1978), p. 60

<sup>455</sup> See above, Section 3.1.4

<sup>456</sup> See above, Section 3.5.5

<sup>457</sup> Takemitsu (1987), p. 10

<sup>458</sup> Takemitsu, transl. Kakudo and Glasow, p. 114

<sup>459</sup> See Section 3.5.5

<sup>460</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 96

that contrasts so strongly with the Western ideal of a unitary perspective, both had their share in influencing the 'pan-focal', stratified textures that are such a typical feature of Takemitsu's orchestral manner.

## Chapter VI

### Timbre

Virtually no biographical notice of Takemitsu, however brief or superficial, ever failed to mention his refined ear for timbre and supreme mastery of instrumental sonority. It is one of the most immediately striking and characteristic features of his musical vocabulary.

‘With the death of Tōru Takemitsu,...we have lost a great musician with an uncannily precise aural imagination and a command of orchestral colour and harmonic nuance second to none.’<sup>461</sup>

Although few would disagree that the fruits of this preoccupation with timbre were, especially in the composer’s later years, scores of staggeringly gorgeous surface beauty, Takemitsu’s interest in this aspect of sound went far deeper than a quest for mere superficial sensuality. He saw such acute sensitivity to timbre as a connection between himself and his own native culture on the profoundest level:

‘The Japanese are a people who have been endowed with a keen receptivity towards timbre from ages past.’<sup>462</sup>

‘I have received many impressions from Japanese traditional music ... I also do not doubt that its sensitivity to tone quality is unparalleled.’<sup>463</sup>

And, on a still deeper level, he recognised that the complex spectral evolution of a single sound supplied vast amounts of information at a rate which no rationalising mind could ever hope to follow:

‘In the process of their creation [the sounds of traditional music], theoretical thinking is destroyed. A single strum of the strings, or even one pluck is too complex, too complete in itself to admit any theory.’<sup>464</sup>

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<sup>461</sup> Oliver Knussen, obituary for Takemitsu in ‘The Independent’, 25/2/96

<sup>462</sup> ‘My Perception of Time in Traditional Japanese Music’, p. 9

<sup>463</sup> Takemitsu, transl. Adachi and Reynolds, op. cit., p. 46

<sup>464</sup> Takemitsu, transl. Kakudo and Glasow, op. cit., p. 51



This, in turn, could have the result that the listener's close attention to such a sound could engage a different mode of perception from the analytic, a kind of direct apprehension of reality that might even approximate to religious enlightenment:

'Of *shakuhachi* music it has been said, "Ichion Jōbutsu" – "With one sound one becomes the Buddha" - suggesting that the universe is explored in a single sound...So, with some exaggeration, I might say God dwells in a single sound.'<sup>465</sup>

These ideas lie at the very core of Takemitsu's æsthetic philosophy, giving glimpses of the depths of abstract intellectualising that lie behind his creation. However, since the present discussion of Takemitsu's musical language is not the appropriate place to explore the ramifications of these ideas, fuller discussion of them must be postponed for the moment until the concluding part of this thesis, and the sections which follow will therefore concentrate on Takemitsu's handling of timbre more or less in its purely 'musical' aspect.

## 6.1 Development of Takemitsu's handling of timbre

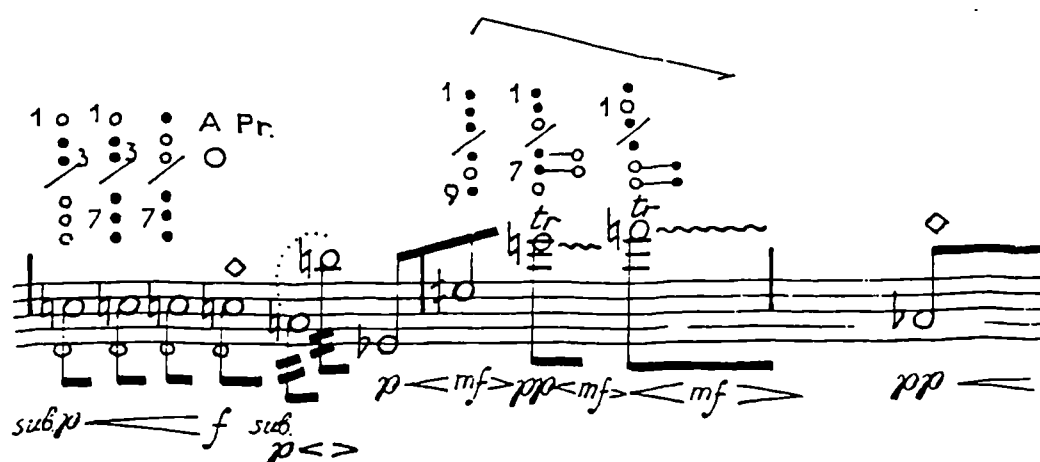
While Takemitsu appears to have had a keen appreciation of timbral subtleties from very early on in his career, his expertise in exploiting this aspect of sound compositionally underwent a gradual refinement that closely parallels his overall stylistic progress. Ohtake notes, for instance, that the early *Futatsu no Rento* was composed on a rented Pleyel piano which, for Takemitsu, possessed a 'sort of nasal sound as in the French language'<sup>466</sup> and on which he 'played a lot of Debussy and Fauré, which suited the instrument.' Such comments certainly reveal an acute sensitivity to instrumental tone, and the delicacy of Takemitsu's writing in this work is clear evidence of Takemitsu's responsiveness to the sonorities both of the instrument itself, and of the kind of music he habitually played on it. At the same time, however, when one places the piano writing of such 'journeyman' scores as this and *Pause Ininterrompue* alongside piano works from the succeeding phase of the composer's career, such as the *Piano Distance* of 1962, it becomes immediately obvious that, while the former are simply sensitive syntheses of established pianistic

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<sup>465</sup> Ibid., p. 65-66

<sup>466</sup> Ohtake, op. cit., p. 7

method, the latter is much more radically ‘experimental’ in terms of timbral effect – involving the player in the production of harmonics, clusters, and a multitude of carefully notated pedalling effects. Much the same kind of contrast can be found between works from the ‘early’ and ‘middle’ phases of Takemitsu’s career for other instrumental media. The few examples already quoted from *Masque* for two flutes, for instance,<sup>467</sup> give a general impression of the character of the instrumental writing in that work, which is certainly idiomatic and effective, and incorporates one or two ‘extended’ devices such as flutter-tonguing and the production of quarter-tones. But one has only to place such examples alongside Ex. 168, from 1971, to illustrate how much more Takemitsu has learned about flute technique during the intervening eleven years, and how much bolder he has become in applying his knowledge.



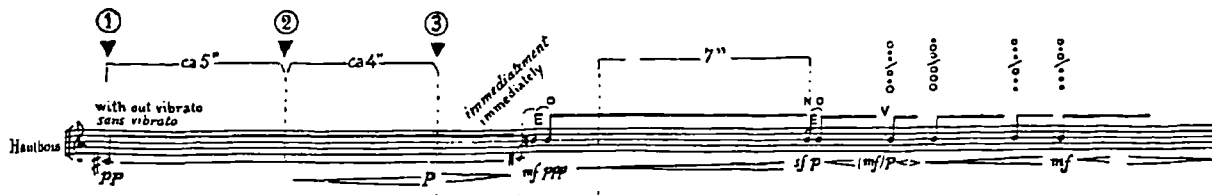
Ex. 168: *Voice for solo flute*

A similarly adventurous spirit manifests itself in Takemitsu’s writing for most other instrumental media during these years of experiment. The ‘multiphonic’ fingerings and other ‘extended’ praxes of *Voice*, for instance, are encountered in parts for other solo winds, such as the clarinet in *Waves*<sup>468</sup> and the oboe in *Eucalypts* (Ex. 169). The alternation of normally fingered notes with harmonics at the same pitch found here, whose economic notation typically gives rise to such accidentally

<sup>467</sup> See Exx. 109 - 112, 141

<sup>468</sup> See below, Ex. 170

amusing combinations as ONO or NONO, was indeed to become almost a cliché of the composer's writing for this instrument.



Ex. 169: *Eucalypts*, opening (oboe)

Takemitsu's writing for strings in this period, exemplified in such works as *The Dorian Horizon* of 1966, with its extensive and fastidious use of harmonics, 'Bartók' pizzicati, *col legno*, behind-the-bridge playing and so forth, likewise represents a considerable advance on that of the *Requiem for Strings* of 1957. Unconventional modes of utterance are also exploited in the case of the brass instruments on occasion, such as the passage in *Cassiopeia* where the players are instructed to blow into their instruments without the mouthpieces, or the writing for the two trombones and horn in *Waves*, with its rapid contrasts of open and muted tone, fluttertonguing and deep, slowly sliding pedal notes. And Takemitsu also not only makes use of large and varied collections of percussion instruments – including exotica such as steel pans and African karimba – but here too requires unorthodox modes of performance from the executants. At the beginning of *Quatrain* (1975), for instance, one of the players is instructed to rub the tam-tam with 'superballs' (an instruction which, incidentally, gives away the work's mid-'seventies vintage), and the same piece dies away to the sound of a 'prayer's bell [sic] on ped. timp.'; while in the film score for *Hanare Goze Orin*<sup>469</sup>, Takemitsu makes use of the well-known device of submerging a tam-tam in water to obtain *glissando* effects. Finally, in Takemitsu's relatively small output of vocal music one also finds evidence of experimentation with 'extended' techniques; the score of *Wind Horse* for mixed chorus, for instance, includes directions for speech, *sprechstimme* and various types of breathing sounds,

<sup>469</sup> 'Orin/Banished', dir. Masahiro Shinoda, 1977



indicating that ‘not only pure sound but also noise is important. Breath sound, speaking sound are also essential elements in *Kaze no Uma*.’<sup>470</sup>

In parenthesis, one may note with interest the fact that Takemitsu’s directions to the players entrusted with the task of obtaining these effects – which have been described as ‘providing acoustic effects with verbal imagery’<sup>471</sup> – vary from the ‘scientific’ (such as the instruction to the above tam-tam player to ‘get the various overtone’ with his superballs) through the ‘half-scientific, half poetic’ (such as the instruction to the bass-drum player in *Waves* to ‘rub the skin of the drum with finger to get various overtone as sound of ocean’ [sic]) to the wholly ‘poetic’ – at which latter extreme of the spectrum, perhaps, belongs the instruction Takemitsu borrowed from Salzedo to describe one of his favourite harp effects: the kind of *bisbigliando* glissando gesture he refers to as ‘æolian rustling.’ The content of these more ‘poetic’ performance indications also reveals that Takemitsu’s aim in many instances is the imitation of ‘natural’ sounds such as the roar of the sea or the howling of the wind. An attempt to evoke the latter sound, for instance, is implied by the various ‘breathing’ effects of *Wind Horse* referred to above, while Shiraishi has suggested that the playing of many short motives by divided strings in *November Steps* is intended as a metaphorical expression of the sound of wind passing through a forest, and notes that the wind players in *Winter* (1971) are specifically requested to make a ‘wind-like’ sound.<sup>472</sup> To this same category of imitative instrumental effects one could also add parts of Takemitsu’s music for the film *Kwaidan*<sup>473</sup>, where ‘sound effects’ evocative of a howling snowstorm or the roar of the ocean in fact turn out to be electronic treatments of, respectively, *shakuhachi* sounds and slowed-down *nō* chanting.

Unsurprisingly, with Takemitsu’s conversion to a more ‘conservative’ musical language in the late ‘seventies the spirit of bold experimentation with new instrumental possibilities was for the most part abandoned. His foreword to Hiroshi Koizumi’s book on flute technique in fact suggests that Takemitsu eventually became disillusioned with the fruits of such experiments:

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<sup>470</sup> Ogawa, op. cit., p. 126

<sup>471</sup> Wu, Ting-Lien, op. cit., p. 14

<sup>472</sup> Shiraishi, op. cit., p. 51

<sup>473</sup> Dir. Masaki Kobayashi, 1964

'In recent years, the extended technique for musical instruments ... has tended to place emphasis on the addition of new sounds rather than on the natural extension of the voice inherent to each instrument ... Multiphonics in particular were once widely used, but the novelty soon wore off, and composers are no longer interested in them. And this technique was not suitable for the flute. The vivacious sonority so characteristic of the flute often turned into hoarse moaning or barbaric shouting which was painful to listen to. In fact, composers inwardly craved for more natural and more diverse tone colour changes.'<sup>474</sup>

Despite the polemic tone of the above, however, which could almost stand as a manifesto for the aesthetics of Takemitsu's 'third period', the composer of the later works did not simply revert to the more restrained and conventional instrumental idiom of his works from the 'fifties. Instead, many of the fruits of his years of innovation were assimilated into the 'common practice' of the relatively stabilised stylistic language of the new era. Thus, for example, while the extended *melos* in 'Arabesque' style of Ex. 171 is a typical feature of a number of woodwind themes encountered in Takemitsu's later works, the variant fingerings of single pitches and 'N-O' notation whereby they are expressed suggest that the lessons learned from the kind of experimentation found in Ex. 169 have not entirely been forgotten.

In an earlier chapter it was suggested that the two discrete instrumental worlds of *November Steps*, East and West, which seemed determinedly to avoid contact with one another, were yet on occasion linked in terms of emphasis on common pitches.<sup>475</sup> A perhaps more significant form of connection between the two, however, are those relationships Takemitsu establishes in the realm of timbre. Wilson, for instance, notes that the harp, plucked *près de la table*, might sound like a *biwa*, and that the use of this instrumental technique constitutes a sort of 'aural bridge' between the two traditions represented here.<sup>476</sup> One might extend this idea further to include other sonorous approximations of this kind. In the key to notational conventions at the beginning of the score, for example, the harpist is instructed in

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<sup>474</sup> Takemitsu, foreword to Koizumi, Hiroshi: 'Technique for Contemporary Flute Music' (Tōkyō: Schott Japan, 1996), p. 3

<sup>475</sup> See above, Section 3.5.4

<sup>476</sup> Wilson, *op. cit.*, p. 139

Ob. solo

3 N o N 3 2 3 2 3 3 3 2 (N)

*sfz p* *poco mf* *p* *sfz p* *f* *mf*

3 (N) 3 6

*pp* *mf* *mf* *p* *f*

Ex. 171: *Orion and Pleiades* III ('Pleiades'), letter G (oboe)

one instance to 'make a quick and powerful glissando on the string with a coin in the direction shown by the arrow', while the *biwa* player is required by another, visually similar symbol to 'rub the designated string lightly from top to bottom with the point of the plectrum', and both players are required to strike the body of their respective instruments with parts of the hand in various ways. Other instances of such timbral similarities are the brief pedal glissando for harp in b. 21 of the work, with its suggestion of the microtonal 'bendings' on the part of the traditional instrumentalists soon to follow; the manner in which the first harp's inward-folding arpeggio here anticipates the *biwa*'s sharply attacked chords; and the way in which the various effects obtained from gongs and tam-tams here with wood and metal beaters (not to mention the 'Bartók' pizzicato for 'cellos) suggest the typical 'slap' gestures of the *biwa* idiom. Such individual, concrete examples of contact between contemporary West and traditional East in the sphere of timbre neatly symbolise *in nuce* the broad philosophical overlap between the two cultures in this particular area, to which more attention will shortly be given.

Just as the kind of association between Eastern and Western media by means

of common pitches in *November Steps* was found also to operate in the exclusively 'Western' instrumental ensemble of *Eucalypts*, so too are the kind of timbral approximations described above also to be found in a purely 'West-West' context. An example is the opening of the 1976 work *Waves*, already quoted as Ex. 170. Here, where similar timbres follow one another consecutively in such a manner that the ear is able to appreciate their relationship, Takemitsu proceeds by a kind of 'timbral imitation.' Thus the bass drum's opening, imperceptibly beginning roll is echoed by the trombone's similar emergence from *niente* on a deep pedal note; the microtonally sharpened Eb with which the clarinet enters is echoed by the same pitch on the trombone; the latter's progression from, and return to, muted *tenuto* tone via fluttertonguing, variant fingerings of the same note and *glissando* is paralleled by the clarinet's movement away from, and return to, *senza vibrato* tone via vibrato and multiphonics; and the rapid alternation between different slide positions to produce the same pitch in the middle of the above trombone phrase is echoed by the clarinet's typical 'NONO' patterns a few seconds later. The clear aural perceptibility of such relationships provides for a measure of coherence and comprehensibility in what might otherwise seem a very loosely structured and meandering score.

## 6.2 Conclusions

The young Takemitsu's affection for the 'nasal' timbre of his rented Pleyel piano, and for the French music which so suited the instrument, mark the beginning of a preference for the delicate sensitivity to sonority characteristic of Gallic composers, in particular Debussy. Takemitsu more than once affirmed his debt to the latter in this field, revealing for example that he took the scores of both *Jeux* and the *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune* to the mountain villa in which *November Steps* and *Green* were composed, 'from a wish to enter into the secrets of Debussy's music, which never ceases to assert a strong influence on my music.'<sup>477</sup> The Debussyan influence confessed to here is certainly obvious enough in the scores in question, particularly in *Green*, where such features as the prominent use of antique cymbals, the inverted pedal point in octaves for strings just before Figure 2, the pedal B $\natural$  at Fig. 11 (at the same pitch as its celebrated counterpart

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<sup>477</sup> Quoted in Dettmer, Roger, sleeve notes for RCA SB 6814



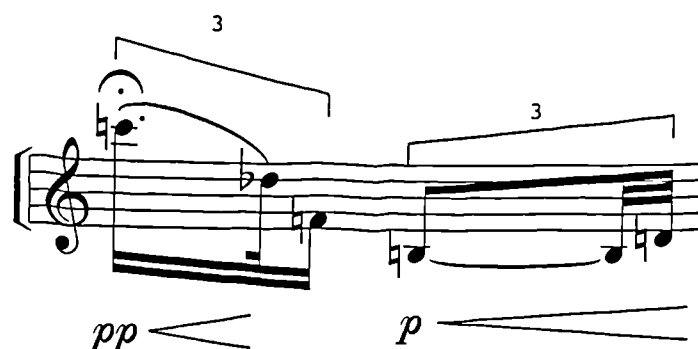
at the opening of *Jeux*), and the scoring of Fig. 2, b. 2, with its bowed *tremolando* harmonies and inner parts of cascading woodwind figures, all point to Takemitsu's exhaustive study of the 'secrets' of the French composer's orchestral palette.

Takemitsu's fascination with the timbral refinement of French music was not confined to musicians of Debussy's generation. It would be most surprising, for instance, if the influence of Olivier Messiaen, which is felt so palpably in Takemitsu's harmonic and melodic practice, were not also detectable in matters of colouristic preference. The most openly Messiaen-influenced of all Takemitsu's scores, *Quatrain*, demonstrates conclusively that such is indeed the case. Of the many deliberate or unintentional homages to Messiaen's *Quatuor* to be found in this score, two at least may be singled out as especially striking. The first is the similarity between certain aspects of the writing for solo clarinet in *Quatrain* and the celebrated *Abîme des oiseaux* for that instrument in Messiaen's work. For example, the protracted emergence of a single pitch from inaudibility at letter H in Takemitsu's work shown in Ex. 172 (i) (in performance actually much longer than the notation would suggest) is clearly related to the similar gesture that appears repeatedly in the *Abîme* (Ex. 172 (ii)).

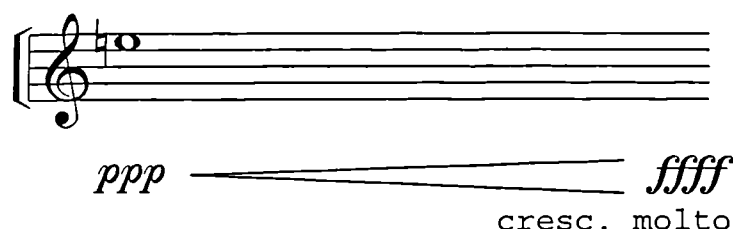
Further similarities between the clarinet writing of these two works are revealed by Ex. 173. The sustained crescendo on what is actually the lowest note of a Bb instrument in extract (i) from *Quatrain* closely parallels the similar crescendo on precisely the same pitch in the *Quatuor* shown in (ii); while the general character of (i), with its wide leaps between registers and ultimately strident dynamic level, bears comparison with the similar registral displacement of melodic line and sustained loudness of the Messiaen extract shown in (iii).

A second area of striking affinity between these two works is in the use of *glissando* material for solo strings in certain places. The first presentation of the main thematic material of *Quatrain*, for instance (letter A), is entrusted to the solo quartet, with the two string instruments providing a background of slow glissandi in harmonics between two pitches, each glissando repeated a number of times like an ostinato, and with the two instruments in contrary motion to one another. The effect is remarkably similar to the isomelodic 'cello figure that forms one strand in the complex musical mechanism of the *Liturgie de cristal* at the opening

(i) Quatrain (1975), Fig. H (cl.)



(ii) Messiaen, Quatuor pour la Fin du Temps, "Abîme des Oiseaux" (cl.)



**Ex. 172: Comparison between clarinet writing in Takemitsu, *Quatrain* and Messiaen, *Abîme des oiseaux* from *Quatuor pour la fin du temps***

of Messiaen's *Quatuor pour la fin du temps*, as other commentators have also remarked – Koozin, for instance, who quotes both the Messiaen and Takemitsu passages in one of his essays, observing that the 'glissandos on harmonics and whole tone implications in the strings' of the Takemitsu were 'very likely influenced by Messiaen's 'cello writing in the previous example [i.e. from the *Quatuor*.]<sup>478</sup>

Several Western composers more contemporaneous with Takemitsu have also left their mark on the composer's colouristic choices. The piercing, brittle 'metallic' sound-world of works such as *Sacrifice*, for instance, strongly suggests the influence of the master of *Le marteau* and *Pli selon pli*, a composer who Funayama feels may also have left his mark on *Stanza I*, with its 'combination of harmony instruments

<sup>478</sup> Koozin (1993), p. 194

(i)

(ii)

(iii)

Ex. 173: (As previous ex.)

and voice' and its 'delicate phrases divided into small parts by the punctuations of *fermatas*.<sup>479</sup> More surprisingly, the influence of Stockhausen, whom Takemitsu encountered at Osaka's Expo '70, is also felt on at least one occasion, when in the *a*

<sup>479</sup> 'Takemitsu Tōru Kenkyū Nōto 6', p. 71. In conversation with the author, Dr. Joaquim Benitez remarked that *Sacrifice* had also been greatly influenced by the score of Berio's *Circles*, with which its composer was very familiar.

*capella* vocal work *Grass* the men's chorus run through the gamut of vowel sounds on single pitches, colouring them with variant harmonic spectra in precisely the manner found in *Stimmung* (Ex. 174).

The image shows three staves of music in bass clef, each with a series of notes on a single pitch. The notes are grouped into three sets of four, each set corresponding to a vowel sound: 'a', 'o', 'i', 'e', 'u'. The first staff is marked 'pp sempre' and 'simile'. The second and third staves are also marked 'pp sempre' and 'simile'. The notes are written in a way that suggests a specific harmonic spectrum for each vowel sound.

Ex. 174: *Grass*, b. 15

The source for much of the ‘extended’ writing for woodwind of the kind found in Ex. 169 is something of an open secret. As Funayama notes<sup>480</sup>, Bruno Bartolozzi’s ‘New Sounds for Woodwind’ appeared in 1967, and *Eucalypts*, which appeared three years later, makes extensive use of such ‘Bartolozzi sounds’. In fact, anecdotal evidence supplied to the author by acquaintances of the composer suggests that he relied exclusively on the Bartolozzi textbook for the multiphonic techniques used in such works as this – a view that gains support from the fact that Bartolozzi’s name is actually mentioned in the performance directions for Takemitsu’s solo flute piece *Voice* of 1971. However, there is at least one case that suggests that some of these sonorities may have been adopted by Takemitsu via another route. It will be observed that in Ex. 169 the invariant pitch selected by Takemitsu for colouration by means of various alternative oboe fingerings is B $\flat$ . This is the same

<sup>480</sup> ‘Takemitsu Tōru Kenkyū Nōto 7’, p. 43

note with which Berio's *Sequenza VII* (1969) begins, and around which that whole work pivots – chosen by him 'because it can be produced by a greater variety of fingerings, each with its own timbre, than any other note on the instrument.'<sup>481</sup> It might be argued that both Takemitsu's and Berio's insistence on this pitch derive independently from the inherent properties of the instrument for which they are composing. But when one takes into account the fact that Berio asks for the note B $\natural$  to be sustained throughout his *Sequenza* by an unspecified sound source, and then turns to the score of Takemitsu's *Distance*, with its long-held pedal B $\natural$ 's for *shō* providing the backdrop for the oboist's multiphonic explorations of that particular pitch (Ex. 175)<sup>482</sup>, then the evidence for Berio's influence seems incontrovertible.

Ex. 175: *Distance* for oboe and *shō*

The example of John Cage is also apparent in one or two of the areas of timbral experimentation in Takemitsu's work. For example, as already mentioned, one of the ways in which his influence first made itself felt in Takemitsu's music was in the use of 'prepared piano' in a number of early film scores from *Otoshiana* onwards; while at the same time, the 'water gong' device mentioned in the previous section is so closely linked to Cage's name and the experiments he made in connection with his 'underwater ballet' for the students at U.C.L.A.<sup>483</sup> that he has more or less assumed the mantle of being its patented inventor.

<sup>481</sup> Osmond-Smith, David, 'Berio' (Oxford: OUP, 1991), p. 120

<sup>482</sup> The *shō* part sounds an octave higher than written

<sup>483</sup> Cf. Cage, John: 'Silence' (London: Calder and Boyars, 1971), p. 86

Takemitsu also drew widely upon Eastern traditions of timbral exploration, most notably of course his own native tradition. On the one hand, this might take the form of specific reference to Eastern instrumental gesture in a Western context. Examples of this have already been presented in the previous section, where effects for certain Western instruments in *November Steps* were shown to possess close analogues in the writing for traditional Japanese instruments in that work. Other examples of this very specific form of East-West contact might be the inclusion in the instrumental ensemble of *Sacrifice* and *Ring* of the lute, an instrument whose common ancestry with the *biwa* in the Persian *oud* Takemitsu was well aware of<sup>484</sup>; the sustained, pentatonic-derived wind harmonies of *A Flock Descends into the Pentagonal Garden* which on occasion strongly evoke the flavour of the *shō*, particularly at letter M where muted trumpets and divided strings colour the ‘magic square’ chords with silvery ‘overtone’-like formations and add *crescendo-diminuendo* dynamic envelopes<sup>485</sup>; or the *shakuhachi*-like nature of much of the extended flute writing in *Toward the Sea*, in which for example the player is instructed at one point gradually to bring in an octave harmonic by overblowing. The kind of solo *Klangfarbenmelodie* in which the same pitch is coloured in different ways, as in Exx. 168-171 and 174-5, is also similar to the traditional ethos of the *shakuhachi* repertoire.

In addition to such specific aural or technical similarities, however, there are also instances where Takemitsu’s use of instrumental colour corresponds in a more general sense to what might be described as the abstract philosophy of timbre inherent in traditional Eastern instrumental *praxis*. Ohtake notes, for instance, that in the piano work *For Away* ‘a broad range of notes is suddenly dissolved into a single note, so as to “listen into” the sound’<sup>486</sup>, a kind of focussing on individual tone quality that is very much in accordance with the æsthetic ideals of much traditional Japanese music. Again, the performance ideal of many traditional Japanese genres is the uncorrupted imitation of natural sounds, as for example in

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<sup>484</sup> See for example ‘The Distance from Ud to Biwa’ in: Takemitsu (transl. Kakudo and Glasow), op. cit., p. 53ff.

<sup>485</sup> The effect of the sustained, ‘senza vibrato’ string chords of *The Dorian Horizon* has also been compared to that of the *shō*; for example by Akiyama (‘Saishin Meikyoku Kaisetsu Zenshū’, v. 13, p. 457), who additionally compares the sound of the pizzicati by which their attacks are emphasised to that of the *kakko*, a *gagaku* percussion instrument

<sup>486</sup> Ohtake, op. cit., p. 84

the *shakuhachi* repertoire, where the tone ultimately aimed at is supposedly that of the wind sweeping through a bamboo grove. Takemitsu's own verbal exhortations to the performers in works such as *Waves* to play 'like the tide of the ocean', as well as the other 'metaphorical' evocations of natural sound listed in the previous section, are clearly translations of this æsthetic tradition into a contemporary Western setting.

It will readily be seen from all of the above that Takemitsu's timbral language incorporates an eclectic mix of techniques and philosophical attitudes from both Eastern and Western traditions. It will also have been noted that it is sometimes possible to attribute the same timbral device, such as the colouration of a single invariant pitch by different harmonic spectra, to the influence of either or both of these traditions. Such a confluence points to the extensive area of overlap that exists between contemporary Western and traditional Eastern thinking on such matters, and it is no exaggeration to say that Takemitsu's discovery of this fruitful congruence was probably his single most significant achievement in the attempt at fusing the musical languages of East and West, and one which it will be necessary to return for further discussion in the concluding chapters of this essay.

## Chapter VII

### Borrowings

It has already been demonstrated that the formal patterns of a significant number of Takemitsu scores comprise elaborate networks of repetitions and near-repetitions of musical materials. This form of recycling, however, was practised not only within the confines of a single musical structure, but occasionally also between different works. Takemitsu borrowed freely from himself, sometimes incorporating whole passages of music *verbatim*, sometimes assimilating themes or materials in more subtly transformed ways. It is as if the kind of network of connections found in so many individual works were replicated on a higher level in terms of connections between discrete musical structures. In addition to such conscious self-quotations, there are a number of recurrent archetypal gestures whose reiteration is presumably more or less unconscious; there are also occasional deliberate quotations of other music, and, on a more generalised level, a propensity to revisit the 'poetic' or 'philosophical' preoccupations of previous works, resulting in a number of series of 'themed' compositions. A consideration of each of these aspects of Takemitsu's fondness for revisiting his own musical past, and that of others, will form the matter of the chapter which follows.

#### 7.1 Quotation from other sources

Only three instances of acknowledged quotation from other musics in Takemitsu's work for the concert hall are known to the present writer. The earliest of these is to be found in *Wind Horse*, a large-scale *a capella* choral work written between 1962 and 1966. Despite the fact that much of this work is composed in an 'advanced' vocal idiom, with taxing use of chromaticism and 'extended' vocal techniques, it thrice breaks into a disarmingly simple harmonisation of what is described as 'a lullaby of the Bantu tribe in Africa', a gently rocking melody in Ab major. This enigmatic juxtaposition actually proves to be rather less of a stylistic rupture than might appear to be the case. The first appearance of the melody takes place, not within the context of the highly chromatic musical idiom



of the first two movements, but in the third movement (for men's voices alone), the suavely tonal, 'barber-shop' character of whose writing is well exemplified by the passage already referred to in another context<sup>487</sup>; furthermore, the characteristic rocking thirds of the melody (Ex. 176) are twice anticipated in this movement in the form of wordless vocalisations in the same key, with similarly unambiguous Ab major premonitions in the fourth and fifth movement, one of which – already quoted elsewhere<sup>488</sup> – again adumbrates the characteristic rocking figure of the theme itself.<sup>489</sup>

The quotation which appears in the third movement of *Folios* for solo guitar (1974) is similarly prepared for by certain details of the music preceding it. Takemitsu describes this citation as 'Matthew Passion Choral No. 72 by J.S. Bach', in other words the famous 'Passion Chorale' attributed to Hans Leo Hassler, *O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden*, in Bach's harmonisation. Two details in particular enable the listener to assimilate this unexpected excursion into the remainder of the work with the minimum discontinuity. First, the chorale is in A minor, and this, as has already been observed in another context<sup>490</sup>, may loosely be described as the 'home key' of the work. Secondly, the descending quavers at the opening of Bach's bass line (Ex. 177) strongly recall a similar anacrusic gesture found elsewhere in Takemitsu's three movements, as can be seen by comparison with the harmonised 'S-E-A' motive quoted in Ex. 116.<sup>491</sup>

While, once again, the exact significance of this quotation is unclear, it is known that Takemitsu greatly revered Bach's music, and was in the habit of preparing himself for the act of composition 'by playing through the *St Matthew Passion* on the piano'<sup>492</sup>, a task which he appears to have regarded as a kind of spiritual purgation.<sup>493</sup> By contrast with the above two examples, however, it is much

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<sup>487</sup> See above, Section 3.1.5, Ex. 87

<sup>488</sup> Section 3.1.1, Ex. 44

<sup>489</sup> Ogawa suggests the presence of a second, unacknowledged 'quotation' in *Wind Horse*, observing that 'The opening melody is apparently adopted from Tibetan folk songs' (op. cit., p. 115)

<sup>490</sup> See above, Section 3.5.3

<sup>491</sup> Section 3.3.2

<sup>492</sup> Knussen, Oliver, obituary for Takemitsu in 'The Independent,' 22/2/96

<sup>493</sup> Ironically, a radio broadcast of the *Matthew Passion* was the last music Takemitsu heard on his deathbed

The musical score for Ex. 176 is written in 2/8 time and consists of four staves. The melody is characterized by a mix of eighth and quarter notes, often beamed together. Dynamics include *p* (piano), *mp* (mezzo-piano), and *mf* (mezzo-forte). The lyrics are as follows:

Staff 1: *p* A bi Yo Yo *mp* A bi Yo Yo A bi

Staff 2: Yo Yo Yo Yo Yo Yo Yo Yo *mf* A bi

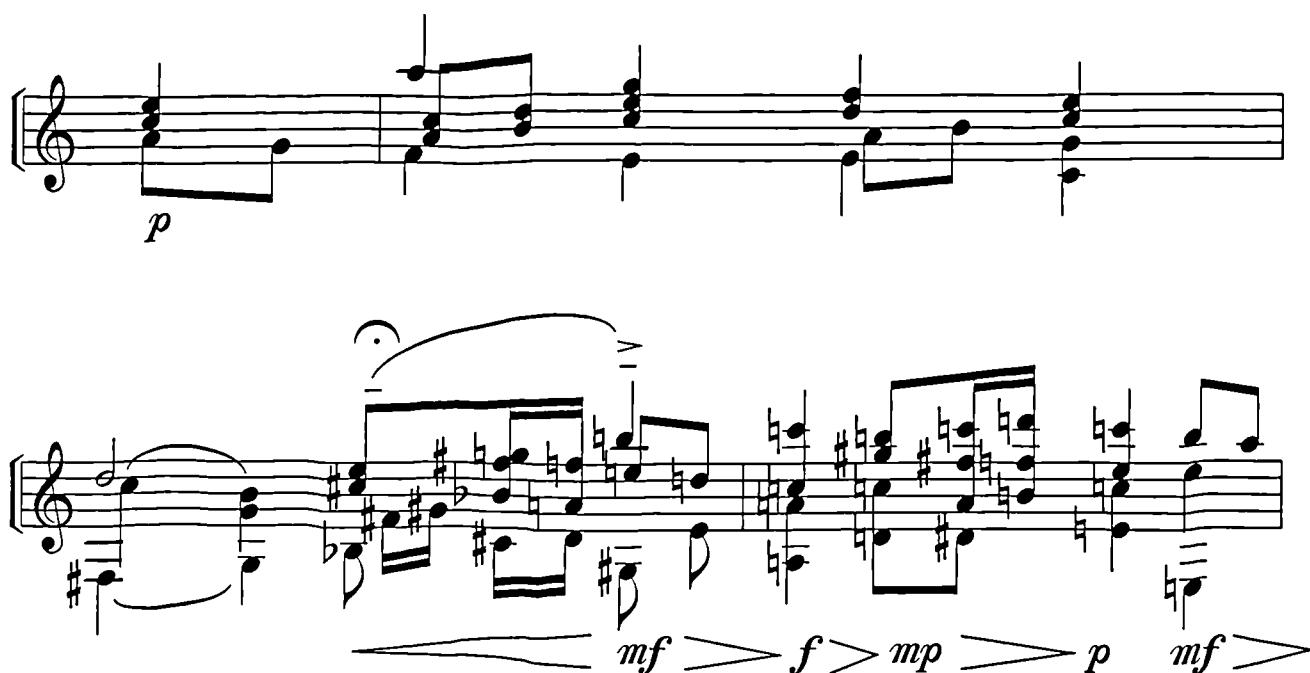
Staff 3: Yo Yo A bi Yo Yo *mp* A bi

Staff 4: Yo Yo Yo Yo Yo Yo Yo Yo

Ex. 176: Bantu melody from *Wind Horse*

easier to understand the rationale behind the choice of the third of Takemitsu's acknowledged quotations, which appears in the 1984 work *Vers, l'arc-en-ciel, Palma*. Since this work was conceived as a homage to the Catalan painter Joan Miró, the appearance of a Catalan folksong, 'La Filadora', towards the close of the work appears – relatively speaking, that is – almost logical.

Although, as already stated, the above three examples comprise the sum total of musical quotations to be found in the composer's works for the concert room, this figure is considerably enlarged if one takes into account the borrowings to be found in the composer's music for the cinema. Takemitsu's scores for both *Nijū-*



Ex. 177: *Folios III*, quotation from J.S. Bach, *Matthäuspassion*

*issai no Chichi*<sup>494</sup> and *Akogare*<sup>495</sup> make use of a Schumann piano piece, No. 16 from *Album für die Jugend*; *Rikyu*<sup>496</sup> includes arrangements (for period instruments) of a chanson by Josquin des Prés and a *Fantasie* by Eustache du Caurroy (1549-1609); and *Moetsukita Chizu*<sup>497</sup> includes a Vivaldi violin concerto and an Elvis Presley song as part of a *musique concrète* collage, as well as a cheesy 'easy listening' arrangement of the former which finally breaks into a recording of the same work played 'straight.' And finally, one should not perhaps leave the subject of direct quotation without mentioning Takemitsu's *And then I knew 'twas Wind* (1992) – not on account of any actual thematic reference which the work contains (although Miyuki Shiraishi claims to hear the well-known Debussy theme from *L'Après-midi* at one point in the score<sup>498</sup>) – but because on this occasion the instrumentation itself is a 'quotation' from the French composer Takemitsu so admired: flute, viola

<sup>494</sup> '21-year-old Father/Our Happiness Alone', dir. Noboru Nakamura, 1964

<sup>495</sup> 'Longing/Once a Rainy Day', dir. Hideo Onchi, 1966

<sup>496</sup> Dir. Hiroshi Teshigahara, 1989

<sup>497</sup> 'The Ruined Map/The Man without a Map', dir. Hiroshi Teshigahara, 1968

<sup>498</sup> Shiraishi, op. cit., p. 50

and harp.

## 7.2 Self-quotation

Throughout his career Takemitsu plundered the resources of his own past output to provide material for new works. Some of these plunderings were from scores outside the canon of 'classical' works that is the subject of this thesis. Thus *The Dorian Horizon* 'draws on materials, most evidently in the central section of its ABA structure, used in the Teshigahara film'<sup>499</sup> of Abe Kōbō's novel *The Woman of the Dunes*<sup>500</sup>; while the theme of *Requiem for strings* is apparently based upon a trumpet melody Takemitsu wrote for a production of an Anouilh play<sup>501</sup> by the *Shiki* ('Four Seasons') theatre troupe in 1956<sup>502</sup> and the film music for *Furyō Shōnen*<sup>503</sup> was later to provide Takemitsu with the material for two concert pieces: *Bad Boy* for two guitars (1993) and *Maru to Sankaku no Uta* ('A Song of ○'s (Circles) and △'s (Triangles)'), the fifth of the songs in the *a capella* vocal work *Uta* (1979-92). This kind of derivative relationship between Takemitsu's concert music and his more 'commercially' oriented work could operate the other way around as well: part of the music for the film *Gishiki*<sup>504</sup> is an arrangement with orchestral accompaniment of the violin and piano work *Hika* of 1966. Such borrowings as these, however, involving as they do works mostly unpublished, and in any case outside the remit of this thesis, do not readily admit of further comment or illustration. Nevertheless, there still remain numerous examples of this type of recycling of material within the limits of Takemitsu's 'classical' output – too numerous, indeed, to be described exhaustively in this brief overview.

The various types of self-quotation in this area of Takemitsu's work may perhaps best be considered in hierarchical fashion, according to the degree of sophistication with which the extant material is reworked in its new context. The lower

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<sup>499</sup> Reynolds, Roger: 'Rarely sudden, never abrupt' (*Musical Times*, CXXVIII/1735 (Sept. 1987)), p. 480

<sup>500</sup> *Suna no Onna*, dir. Hiroshi Teshigahara, 1964

<sup>501</sup> *Semushi no Seijō*, a reworking of *Ardèle, ou la Marguerite*

<sup>502</sup> Cf. Akiyama, Kuniharu, biographical notes in Takemitsu (1971), p. 216. Akiyama incorrectly gives the date of this incidental music as 1954, which was the year in which the same play was produced under its original title (*Arudēru, mata wa Seijō*), with music by another composer

<sup>503</sup> 'Bad Boys', dir. Susumu Hani, 1961

<sup>504</sup> 'The Ceremony', dir. Nagisa Oshima, 1971

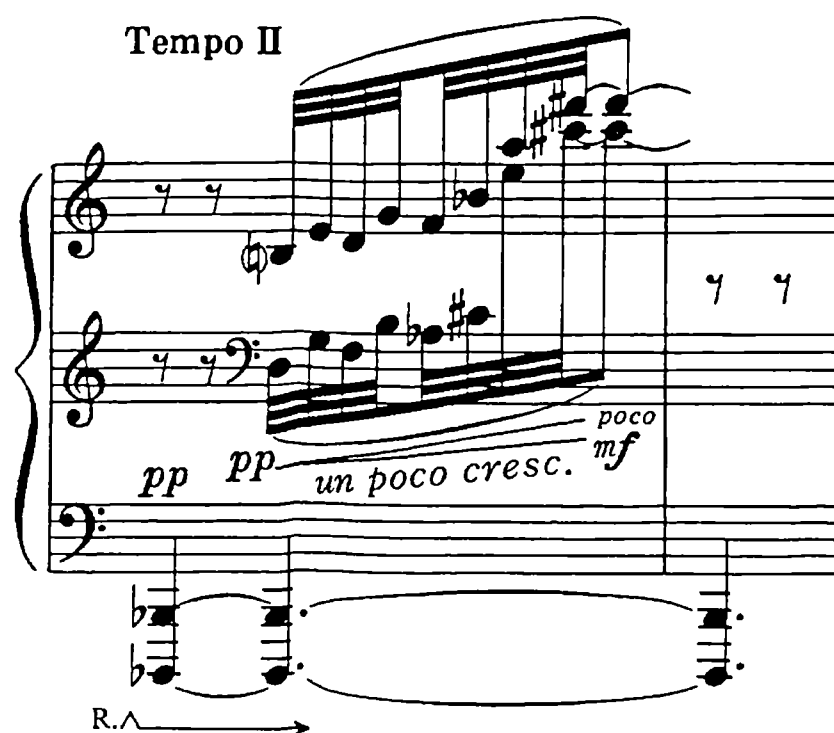
end of such a distribution might then be occupied by the simplest form of borrowing, wherein the pre-existent material is incorporated more or less wholesale into the new work. Takemitsu's *Crossing* of 1970, a work involving four soloists, female voices and two orchestras which, as has already been mentioned in another context<sup>505</sup>, was written for projection in the 'Space Theatre' at Expo '70 in Ōsaka, and which is based in large measure on an expansion for these vast forces of the chamber work *Stanza I* of 1969, might stand at one end of the scale as an example of this least adorned kind of reworking. Somewhat more compositional intervention is manifested in the translation of *Orion*, for 'cello and piano, into the three-movement work for 'cello and orchestra *Orion and Pleiades*, but nevertheless, the first movement of the new work is simply a straightforward, bar-for-bar 'orchestration' of the original *Orion*, and there are other examples of this rather old-fashioned 'arrangement' in Takemitsu's work, such as the expansion of the string quartet *A Way A Lone* into a work for string orchestra, or the addition of amplifying string parts to the chamber trio of *Toward the Sea* to produce *Toward the Sea II*. However, with the co-existent *Eucalypts I* and *II* of 1971, or *Quatrain I* and *II* of 1975, a rather different situation obtains. Both of these works exist in versions for chamber ensemble, and for the same combination plus an orchestral group. But while it is true that the chamber original is incorporated note for note into the instrumental expansion, the orchestral parts do not simply double the solo players, but add further layers of newly composed material – material which, in the case of *Eucalypts*, at least, is actually almost wholly independent of that allotted to the soloists.

Elsewhere in Takemitsu's music the composer purloins not whole pre-existent works but short fragments of them – often lifting a bar or two *verbatim* as if cut out with a scissors, producing literal repetitions of much the same kind as those that have previously been remarked upon within the confines of single works. For example, the closing gesture of *Rain Tree Sketch* for piano (Ex. 178) turns up with only minor variations in the chamber music composition *Rain Coming* of the same year (Ex. 179).

Another bar from *Rain Tree Sketch* (Ex. 180) appears in *Grass* for men's chorus (Ex. 181), also written in the same year, although here the quotation is transposed

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<sup>505</sup> See above, Section 4.3



Ex. 178: *Rain Tree Sketch*, bb. 61-62

up a minor third and revoiced, and in the final harmony a different pitch is substituted for one of those expected at this transposition – precisely the kinds of alterations to repeated materials that have already been observed at work in individual pieces.<sup>506</sup>

A more subtle form of integration occurs when Takemitsu imports short motivic ideas, or even single harmonies, from pre-existent sources. The reappearance of the four-note motive *x* from *Masque* in *Hika* is one example of this practice that has already been commented upon<sup>507</sup>. The score of *Hika* also makes use on a number of occasions of the brief ‘upbeat’ figure highlighted in Ex. 182, which is quoted from the opening of the third movement of the composer’s *Pause Ininterrompue*, written seven years earlier.<sup>508</sup>

<sup>506</sup> Yet a third passage from *Rain Tree Sketch* also leads a double life of this kind: bars 42-43 appear in a vertically expanded and reworked version in *Rain Coming* (letter D, bb. 2-3)

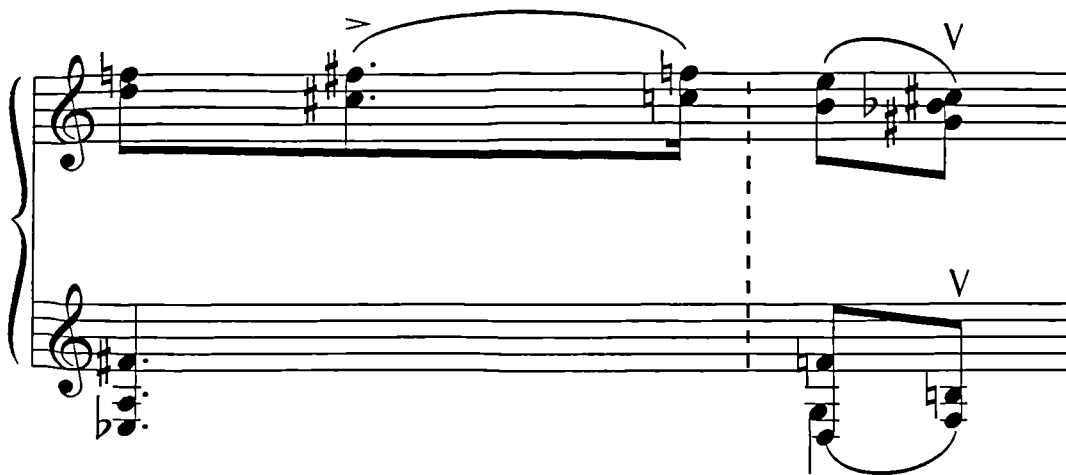
<sup>507</sup> See above, Section 3.3.2, Exx. 109-113

<sup>508</sup> Quoted below, Section 7.3, Ex. 189

Musical score for Ex. 179: *Rain Coming*, letter Q, b. 9. The score includes parts for Piano (Cele.), Vibraphone, Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, and Double Bass. The Piano part is marked *legato* and *pp*, with a *retenu.* instruction. The Vibraphone part is marked *(hard mallets)*. The string parts (Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, and Double Bass) are marked *S.T.* and *pp*, with a *retenu.* instruction. The Double Bass part is also marked *(ord.)*.

Ex. 179: *Rain Coming*, letter Q, b. 9

Whether by design or otherwise, certain motives appear repeatedly in several Takemitsu works. Two such recurrences – certainly by design – are those of the



Ex. 180: *Rain Tree Sketch*, bb. 25-26

‘S-E-A’ motive already referred to<sup>509</sup> and of the opening oboe theme of *A Flock Descends into the Pentagonal Garden*, which reappears in the viola and piano work *A Bird Came down the Walk* of 1994. Both of these themes have, as Shiraishi points out, a ‘symbolic meaning’<sup>510</sup> in the context of Takemitsu’s work – the oboe theme, explicitly identified by the composer as representing the ‘flock’ in the title of the earlier work, becoming the ‘bird’ of the later one.<sup>511</sup> There are also a number of other motivic types that resurface from work to work in this manner, of which two examples are given below: a three-note figure followed by its own transposition at the tritone, harmonically implying the octatonic subset of two dominant sevenths a tritone apart (Ex. 183); and the rising, arpeggio-like figure shown in Ex. 184, also projecting an octatonic subset. As can be seen from the sources referred to, these two ideas both figured, like the ‘S-E-A’ motive, in a number of works of the composer’s later period.

Up to this point it may appear that such recyclings of material may be simply the result of a pragmatic parsimony on the part of a busy composer constantly bombarded with new commissions. While there is possibly a certain degree of truth in such an assessment, any illusions that this is always the case are certainly

<sup>509</sup> See Section 3.3.2, Ex. 116

<sup>510</sup> Shiraishi, op. cit., p. 50

<sup>511</sup> The two words are identical in the original Japanese

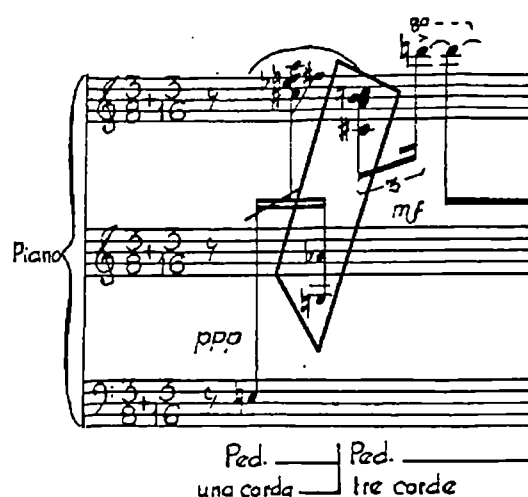




Ex. 181: *Grass*, b. 17

dispelled by the final example in this review, which represents the extreme end of the spectrum of sophistication with which Takemitsu integrates his borrowed materials into their new habitat. *Green* was composed at the same time as *November Steps*, and was in fact originally entitled *November Steps II*, Takemitsu's new title for the work reflecting 'the foliation of spring as he composed the two *November Steps* of buds into young leaves'<sup>512</sup> The pairing of the two works implied by this statement leads the commentator to suspect that there may be some intimate musical connection between them, and one instance of such a relationship does indeed readily present itself for consideration. Ex. 185 places bar 12 of *November Steps*

<sup>512</sup> Dettmer, Roger, op. cit.



Ex. 182: *Hika*, b. 1

alongside the first bar of Fig. 7 of *Green*. From this comparison it may be observed that the latter is essentially a reworking of the former a whole-tone lower. The ‘upbeat’ gestures of A1-3 have their counterpart in A4, which transposes the upper five voices of the former down a major ninth (with a couple of minor alterations), and shifts their temporal relationship to the remainder of the material; the harp glissandi (B1-2) are re-interpreted by tuned percussion (B3); the sequence of six eight-note chords in parallel motion (C1-2) appears a whole-tone lower as C3-4, and the five chord sequence for violas (D1-2) appears a whole-tone lower, with slight changes, as D3-4.

On the surface, the equivalence of these two passages would appear to lie rather at the cruder end of the scale of sophistication with which Takemitsu is apt to integrate his self-borrowings into their new context (and the second passage is itself repeated twice in *Green* with no significant alteration other than wholesale transposition.) But the relationship between the two works does not end here. It will be observed that, in the course of transplantation to its new surroundings, the ‘D’ material of Ex. 185 retains its distinctively pentatonic upper melodic line, even if the underlying harmony undergoes several changes. This technique of varying the ‘harmonisation’ of a more or less unvaried ‘melodic’ line, which has already been referred to as one of Takemitsu’s favoured methods of proceeding<sup>513</sup>, has significant

<sup>513</sup> See above, Section 2.2.5

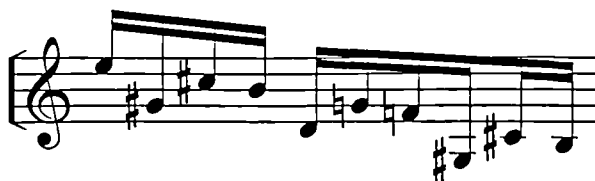
(i) A Flock Descends  
into the Pentagonal  
Garden (1977), E/9  
(cl.)



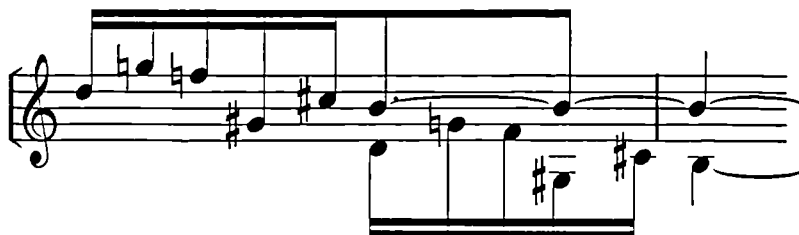
(ii) To the Edge of  
Dream (1983), Z/2  
(solo guitar)



(iii) Rocking Mirror  
Daybreak  
(1983), IV, b.19, vln.1



(iv) All in Twilight  
(1988, solo  
guitar), II, b.26



(v) A String around  
Autumn (1989), I/4  
(solo vla.)



### Ex. 183: Motivic type recurring in various late-period works

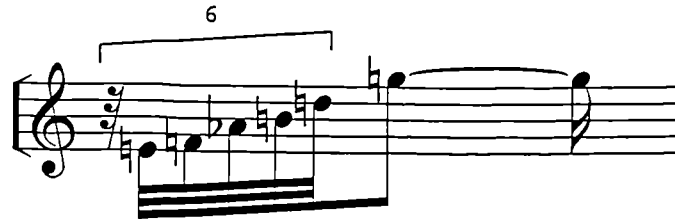
repercussions for the way this imported material was to prove a fecund source of ideas for the composer in its new context. The processes whereby the material was transformed may perhaps best be understood by examining the appearances of this theme in reverse order to that in which they appear in the score. Shortly before the above passage, for instance, the five-chord pattern appears in augmentation, in a harmonisation much closer to that employed in *November Steps*, each chord now consisting of a transposition of its equivalent in the latter work, plus one added pitch.<sup>514</sup> A little while before this, there is another appearance of the sequence, but

<sup>514</sup> This passage has already been quoted in another context. Cf. the second bar of Ex. 25, Section

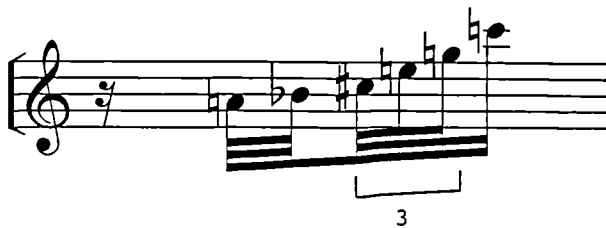
(i) Vers, l'Arc-en-ciel, Palma (1984),  
b. 9, vln. + cl.



(ii) I Hear the Water Dreaming (1987),  
L / 5



(iii) Tree Line (1988), A / 2

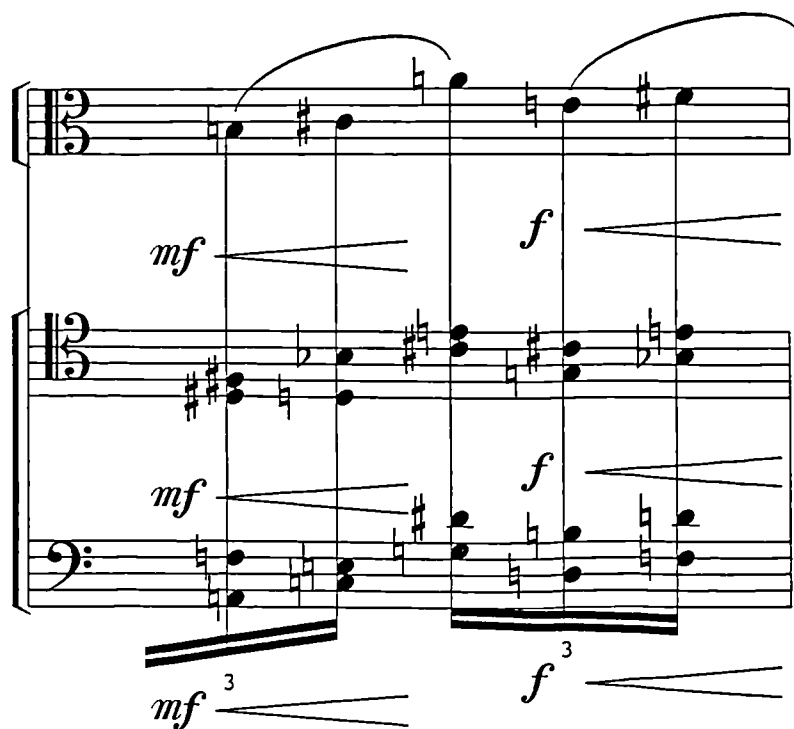


Ex. 184: As previous Ex.

this time with a significant transposition of the fourth and fifth harmonies down one octave, giving a highly distinctive melodic profile to the uppermost pentatonic line (Ex. 186.)

Finally, in the version previous to this, Takemitsu retains this distinctive melodic contour, but divests it of its original harmonic support entirely and provides a whole new set of 'accompanying' chords to create the lyrical, suavely harmonised principal thematic idea of *Green*, with which the whole work begins (already quoted in Ex. 7a). Thus the opening melodic statement of *Green*, with whose material so much of remainder of the work is intimately bound, derives directly from the





Ex. 186: *Green*, Fig. 5, b. 1

thematic material imported from *November Steps*; and the two works are consequently related on a much profounder level than that achieved in almost any other of Takemitsu's instances of self-reference, placing their relationship one with another at the very top of his scale of refinement in this respect.

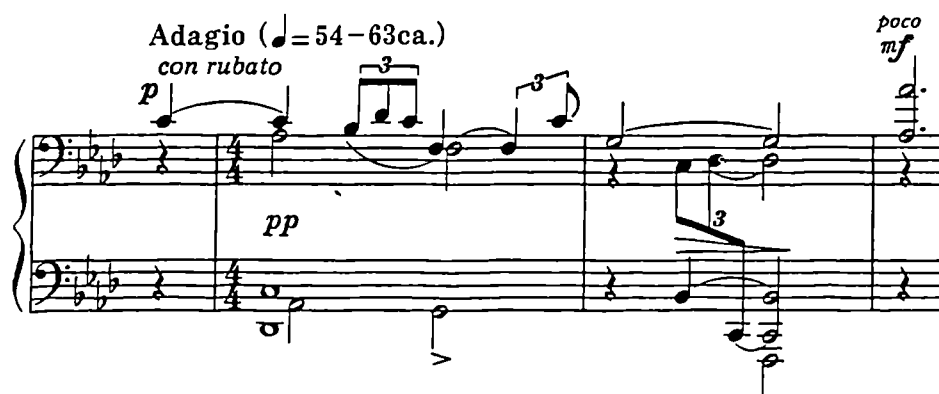
It will not have escaped the reader, however, that the hypothetical process of composition suggested here – the derivation of the material for *Green* by refinement of a short fragment from *November Steps* – might equally well have taken place in reverse order, with the variant of the *Green* material arrived at in Ex. 185 simply incorporated into *November Steps* as part of the wholesale lifting of this one bar. Since both works were written at more or less the same time, and the composer gives no indication of the order of their composition, either interpretation is equally valid. A similar uncertainty arises when trying to ascribe primogeniture to any of the materials quoted in Exx. 178-181, which were also all written in the same year. It would appear that, once again, attempts to find a definitive causal ordering of events prove fruitless, and one has instead to accept the presence of yet another,

Fourth Type of Ambiguity surrounding the inscrutable workings of Takemitsu's compositional process.

### 7.3 'Takemitsu topoi'

Alongside such precise and, one assumes, intentional rehearsals of material already employed in other contexts, there exist in Takemitsu's *œuvre* other less defined archetypal preoccupations to which the composer repeatedly returns in different works. Such presumably unconscious characteristic gestures are key ingredients in the shaping of a consistent, instantly recognisable musical language in Takemitsu's case, as they are in the case of any composer. Legion in number as they are, however, space permits reference to only a few of the most striking of these *Takemitsu topoi* in the pages which follow.

One characteristic gesture of this sort actually launched Takemitsu's official composing career, and remained a typical stylistic feature of a number of his works for several years thereafter. *Futatsu no Rento* begins with a single, unaccompanied, sustained pitch, which is then joined by supporting harmony, and subsequently reveals itself as the first note of an extended melodic phrase. This opening gesture is preserved intact in the work's 1990 'recomposition' as *Litany* (Ex. 187.)



Ex. 187: *Litany in Memory of Michael Vyner*, bb. 1-3

The *incipits* of the three other early Takemitsu scores quoted below – the first and final movements of *Pause Ininterrompue* (Exx. 188-189) and the *Requiem for*

*strings* (Ex. 190) – are all clearly cast in the same mould as this earlier opening gesture. Each work begins with a single unsupported pitch (provided with a semitone anacrusis in the case of Ex. 188) which is then joined by other events; in Ex. 189, as in Ex. 187, this pitch reveals itself as the first note of the melodic line, while in the other two instances it is sustained to become part of the harmony against which the melody unfolds. Beginnings of this type remained a part of Takemitsu's language at least as late as the mid 'sixties: two of the movements of *Arc – Solitude* and *Coda* – begin in this manner.

**Triste** [♩ = 48]

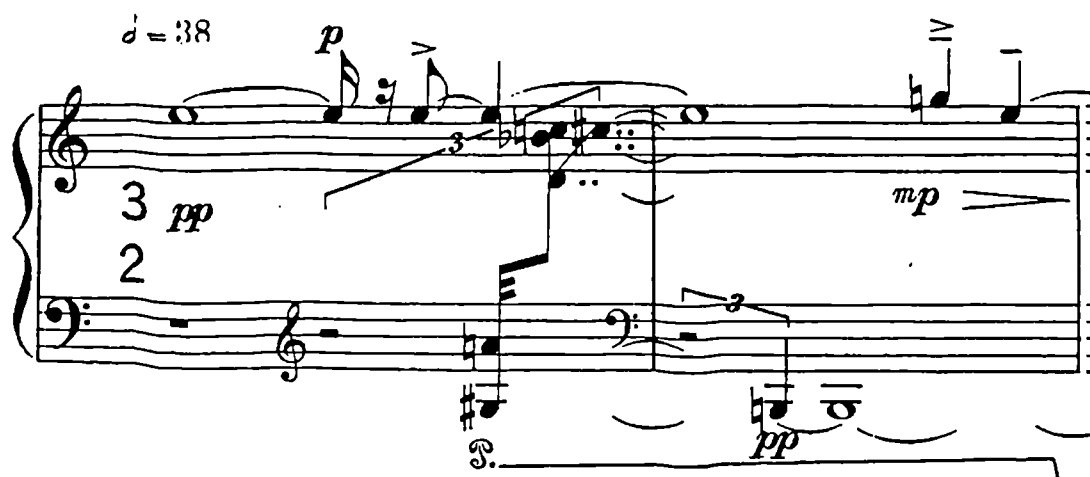
*quasi parlando*

Ex. 188: *Pause Ininterrompue* I, opening

Another early Takemitsu score, *Distance de Fée*, affords a glimpse of a typical melodic turn that was to remain part of the composer's vocabulary for even longer: the upwardly-mobile, two-note 'anacrusic' pattern of the kind highlighted as (a.) in Ex. 191.

These 'iambic' patterns – not always necessarily notated as upbeat-downbeat pairs – are to be found throughout the successive phases of Takemitsu's composing career. Ex. 192 from *The Dorian Horizon* shows a very typical instance of this type of formation from the composer's 'middle' period, while Ex. 193 indicates





Ex. 189: *Pause Ininterrompue III*, opening

that the gesture still formed part of the composer's habitual mode of utterance in the 'eighties.<sup>515</sup>

The last example simultaneously demonstrates another recurrent surface feature of Takemitsu's music, this time one especially associated with the products of his maturer years – the statement of themes in a kind of additive, incremental fashion, or exposition *in statu nascendi*. The principal theme of *A String Around Autumn*, for instance, also first emerges in this hesitant, stuttering fashion (Ex. 194.)

All of the above recurrent preoccupations concern themselves with thematic presentation, except perhaps the first, which is also a textural device. Characteristic modes of utterance are found in numerous other aspects of Takemitsu's music, however, and it is perhaps appropriate to end by drawing attention to a few of the most important of these.

In the sphere of instrumental colour one notes the frequent reappearance of the grave, sombre string writing typified by the early *Requiem for Strings* in the form of episodes of similar darkly intense string writing in later orchestral scores. In *To the*

<sup>515</sup> Another example of this *topos* from a work of the composer's later years may be found in the quotations from *Orion* (Exx. 18a-c) in Section 2.2.7

# REQUIEM

pour orchestre à cordes

Lent  $\text{♩} = 66$

Violons I  
Violons II  
Altos  
Violoncelles  
Contrebasses

Ex. 190: *Requiem for strings*, opening

*Edge of Dream* for instance, which was apparently inspired by the surrealist images of Paul Delvaux, a significant contribution to the overall ‘nocturnal’ atmosphere is made by the fact that the strings always play muted except in two short passages – intensifying the effect of the typical string interludes to create a kind of *film noir* mood which recalls not only some of Takemitsu’s own film music but also that of the classic Hollywood movies Takemitsu so admired in the pre-war years.<sup>516</sup>

This same score also provides an example of a *topos* that operates on the rhetorical level. As Jeong Woo Jin has observed, ‘Another device which is common in Takemitsu’s music is the incorporation of a sudden, brief outburst which immedi-

<sup>516</sup> See Takemitsu (1989), p. 200, where the composer reveals his knowledge of, and affection for, this particular area of cinematic repertoire

a.)

mf

p

mp

b.)

p

Ex. 191: *Distance de Fée*, b. 5

con sord.

VIB.

(flag.)

1

2

3

Vn.

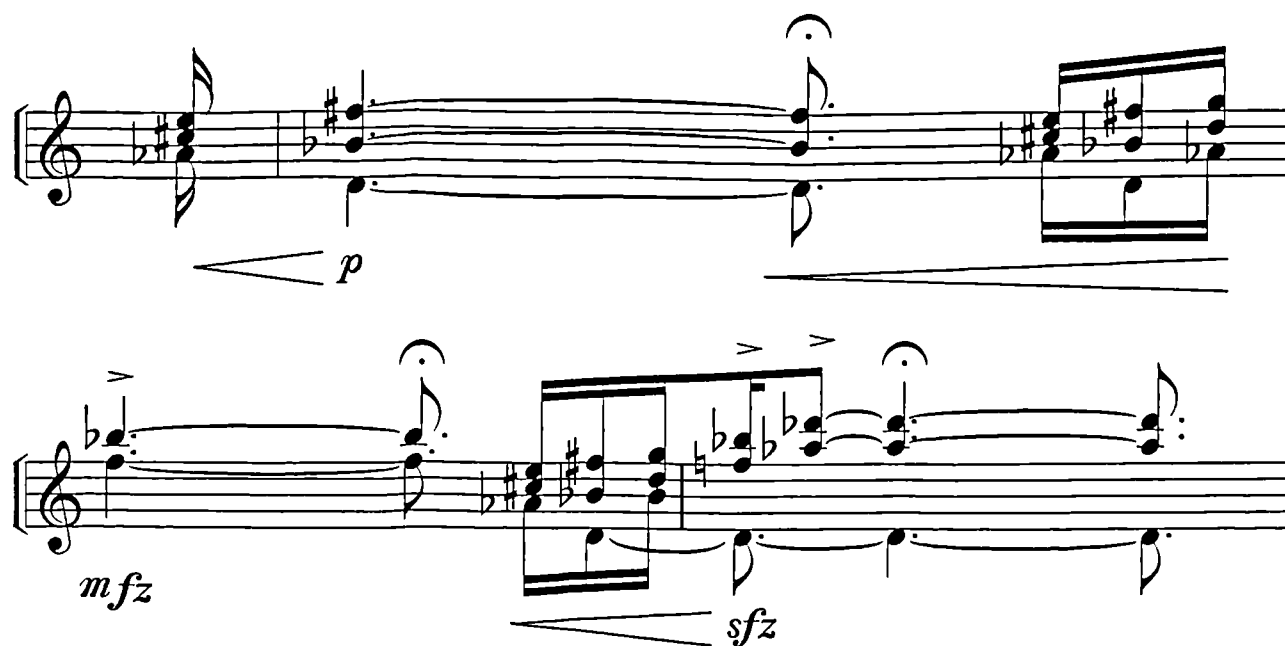
4

5

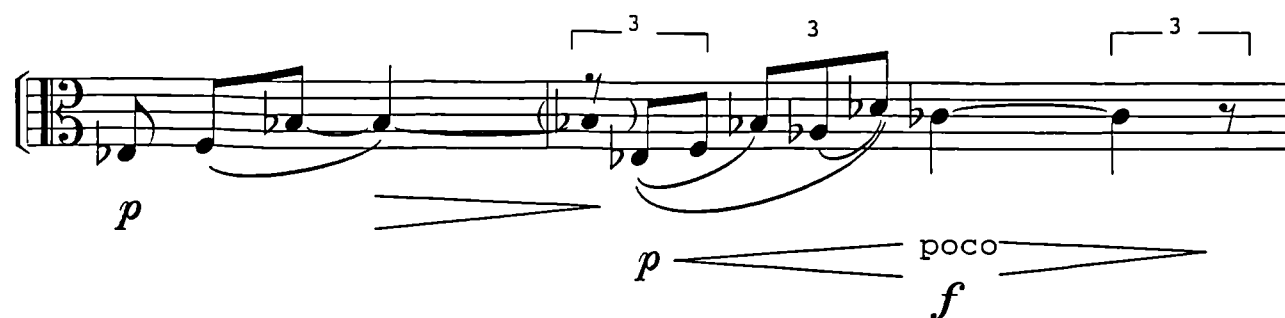
6

p

Ex. 192: *The Dorian Horizon*, b. 23



Ex. 193: *Rain Tree*, p. 10, systems 1-2



Ex. 194: *A String around Autumn*, solo viola, letter B

ately subsides<sup>517</sup>, and something of this nature can be seen in a very specific and typical form on p. 6 of *To the Edge of Dream*, where the orchestra builds up to typical *Takemitsu climax*, one which resolves itself dramatically onto a sustained low pedal note. A similar thing occurs at letter K, b. 3 of *A String around Autumn*, where a climactic string passage resolves on the downbeat onto a C# doubled over seven octaves. In a variant of this type of dramatic gesture, the pedal point may

<sup>517</sup> Jin, op. cit., p. 36

precede the climactic moment; examples of this type of procedure may be found in *A Flock Descends into the Pentagonal Garden*, where a twice-repeated orchestral climax is built from a double pedal on C $\flat$ -C $\sharp$  in the bass followed by a massive chordal statement of the total-chromatic<sup>518</sup>, or in *Rain Tree Sketch*, where the climactic moment at b. 33 comprises a triple pedal point on C $\sharp$  in the bass followed by rapid figurations above it in the right hand. Koozin, interestingly, notes that this latter climax, which involves the first octave doubling in the bass in this work, occurs at the 'exact midpoint' of the piece from a notational point of view.<sup>519</sup>

Finally, since this section began with a discussion of one of the composer's habitual means of beginning, it would perhaps be appropriate to close with a discussion of Takemitsu's typical modes of conclusion. The standard gesture of final closure in virtually all of Takemitsu's music – balancing the emergence 'out of silence' which has already been seen to be typical of some of his works – is the fading of the last sound to *niente*. Takemitsu's own notes for his *Requiem for Strings* assert that 'both the beginning and the end remain unclear', and Ogawa has observed in the composer's work the general principle that 'corresponding to Takemitsu's notion ... that music emerges from silence and diminishes in silence, his music mostly begins with soft dynamics and ends with "fading out" '.<sup>520</sup> Additionally, however, one notes that in the case of many of Takemitsu's scores this ultimate gesture is preceded by a concluding passage on a heightened poetic level relative to the rest of the work, one which often includes a striking instrumental, melodic or harmonic effect that has clearly been held in reserve up to this point to lend a 'magical' quality to the peroration. Jin<sup>521</sup> observes a phenomenon of this kind in both *Rain Tree* and *Rain Spell*, noting that 'the epilogue is certainly a magical moment in both works', and one could apply the same kind of descriptive language to the ending of *Green* already referred to<sup>522</sup>, the indescribable instrumental effects over a similar 'dominant' pedal at the end of *Marginalia* (1976), or the coda of *A Way a Lone* (1981), which begins with the 'cello, against a background of trills and tremolandi, stating the 'S-E-A' motive in artificial harmonics. Roger Reynolds has

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<sup>518</sup> Quoted above as Ex. 80, Section 3.1.3

<sup>519</sup> Koozin (1988), p. 278

<sup>520</sup> Ogawa, op. cit., p. 114

<sup>521</sup> Op. cit., loc. cit

<sup>522</sup> See Section 3.3.1, under 'Pentatonic Scales'

suggested a possible explanation for this practice which relates it closely to the implicit philosophy behind Takemitsu's preference for emergence from, and return to, silence at the outermost extremes of his works:

'Takemitsu's works often close with a strikingly lyrical coda. When questioned about this he admits that he does not want the music to end. If he puts a melodic fragment at the close, he muses, the listener may feel "...ah, from here the music begins."'<sup>523</sup>

## 7.4 'Themed' series of compositions

The reappearance of actual musical 'themes' from one work to another in Takemitsu's music has a more abstract analogue, in the shape of certain sets of compositions whose underlying conceptual frameworks all share the stimulus of the same extra-musical 'theme', which very often proves to be a natural phenomenon. For example, the early orchestral work *Music of Tree* (1961) eventually proved to be the first term in a series of works with an 'arborial' theme to which Takemitsu continued to contribute for the next twenty-seven years – adding to it *Green* in 1967, *Eucalypts* in 1970 and *Tree Line* in 1988, as well as making a reference to what the composer apparently perceives as the 'antonym' of trees<sup>524</sup> in the title of his *Grass* (1982.) This 'series' in its turn proved to be the first term in a series of series, of which the next in historical sequence to emerge was the 'star' series initiated by *Asterism* (1967), and later to include *Cassiopeia* (1971), *Star-Isle* (1982), *Orion/Orion and Pleiades* (1984) and *Gémeaux* (1971-86). With *Garden Rain* (1974), however, Takemitsu embarked on his largest and perhaps most significant grouping of this kind, the numerous works whose titles all contain some kind of aquatic reference.<sup>525</sup> Sawabe sees this series of works on the theme of 'water' as pointing in two directions, 'namely to the horizontal level of river, sea and ocean ... and the vertical level of rain'<sup>526</sup>, while, interestingly, Funayama has suggested that 'in Takemitsu's music, "sea" is an image of death and "river"

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<sup>523</sup> Takemitsu, transl. Adachi and Reynolds, op. cit., p. 79 (footnote by Reynolds)

<sup>524</sup> See Ohtake, op. cit., p. 25

<sup>525</sup> At the same time, the first part of this work's title also relates it to another 'theme' in the composer's work, that of 'gardens' – cf. *A Flock Descends into the Pentagonal Garden* (1977), *In an Autumn Garden* (1973/79), *Spirit Garden* (1994)

<sup>526</sup> Sawabe, op. cit., p. 52

deeply bound up with the idea of life<sup>527</sup>. It was the with the idea of water in its 'vertical' aspect, however, that Takemitsu himself most associated the works comprising this series, as the preface to one of the scores in the collection shows:

'*Rain Coming* is one of a series of works by the composer inspired by the common theme of rain. The complete collection entitled "Waterscape" includes other works, such as *Garden Rain...*('74), *Rain Tree...*('81), and *Rain Spell...*('82). It was the composer's intention to create a series of works, which like their subject<sup>528</sup>, pass through various metamorphoses, culminating in a sea of tonality.'<sup>529</sup>

As already noted<sup>530</sup>, the idea of a journey towards a sea of tonality could almost serve as a metaphor for the development of Takemitsu's harmonic language during these years, and the 'Waterscape' series thus assumes considerable importance as one of the principal vehicles for what was to prove the wholesale transformation of Takemitsu's musical style. Another set of 'themed' compositions dating from the 'seventies, to which the composer referred as 'Dream and Number', actually comprises two 'sub-sets'. On the one hand, there are works clearly 'number'-inspired, such as *Quatrain* (1975), whose preoccupation with the number four is clearly implicit in its title. On the other, there are works whose inspiration lies at the opposite pole from the rational, ordered world of Number, as in the case of *Dreamtime* (1981), *To the Edge of Dream* (1983) and *Dream/Window* (1985). *A Flock Descends into the Pentagonal Garden* (1977), however, with its emphasis on the number five on the one hand, and its inspiration in a dream on the other, contrives to be simultaneously a member of both sub-groupings. This kind of 'dual citizenship' is found in a number of other Takemitsu works: *Rain Dreaming* for harpsichord (1986) and *I hear the Water Dreaming* (1987) clearly belong to both the 'Waterscape' and 'Dream and Number' categories, and the same property is acknowledged in the case of *Far Calls. Coming, Far!* (1980) by the composer himself. The title of this work comes from the closing pages of *Finnegans Wake*, a text which, while 'full of Joyce's characteristic dreaming verbalism', to Takemitsu

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<sup>527</sup> 'Takemitsu Tōru Kenkyū Nōto 14', p. 52

<sup>528</sup> Composer's own punctuation

<sup>529</sup> Takemitsu, preface to score of *Rain Coming*, 1982

<sup>530</sup> See above, Section 1.3

‘also seems to be peculiar for its image of water.’<sup>531</sup> By thus effecting a synthesis between the preoccupations of both the ‘Dream and Number’ and ‘Waterscape’ sequences, therefore, *Far Calls. Coming, Far!* ‘may be seen as a confluence of the two series.’<sup>532</sup>

Various other thematic threads, not necessarily explicitly acknowledged by the composer, have been observed running through Takemitsu’s work by commentators on the subject. Thus Mitsuko Ono perceives an ‘autumnal’ theme connecting *November Steps* (1967), *Autumn* (1973), *From Far Beyond Chrysanthemums and November Fog* (1983), *A String around Autumn* (1989) and *Ceremonial: an Autumn Ode* (1992)<sup>533</sup>, while Funayama refers to the ‘Finnegans Wake Tryptich’ of *Far Calls. Coming, Far!* (1980), *A Way a Lone* (1981) and *riverrun* (1987)<sup>534</sup> and to a not-quite-translatable series comprising *Eclipse* (1966), *November Steps* (1967) and *Eucalypts* (1970), whose titles, in their Japanese transliterations, all contain the same ‘*pusu*’ sound (!)<sup>535</sup> Perhaps the extra-musical ‘theme’ to which the Takemitsu canon made reference earliest, however, and which remained a pre-occupation of the composer for longest, is one to which he never drew explicit attention – the idea of Death, or more precisely, of Remembrance. Reverence for the dead of course assumes a much more prominent rôle in Japanese culture than in the West, and it is therefore hardly surprising that a Japanese composer, especially one whose music is so consistently imbued with a mood of *gravitas* as is Takemitsu’s, should reflect this obsession by producing several works of funerary or memorial character. Takemitsu’s list of musical ‘*tombeaux*’ is indeed extensive, including epitaphs for the poet of *Uninterrupted Rests*, Shūzo Takiguchi (*Les Yeux Clos*, 1979), the film director Andrei Tarkovsky (*Nostalghia*, 1987), the sculptor Isamu Noguchi (*Itinerant* for solo flute, 1989), the artistic director of the London Sinfonietta, Michael Vyner (*My Way of Life* and *Litany*, 1990), as well as the musicians Morton Feldman (*Twill by Twilight*, 1988), Olivier Messiaen (*Rain Tree Sketch II*, 1992) and Witold Lutosławski (*Paths*, 1994). This series could be said

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<sup>531</sup> Composer’s programme note for a performance of the work by the Tōkyō Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra at the Barbican Centre, London, 12/4/88

<sup>532</sup> Ibid.

<sup>533</sup> Ono, Mitsuko, ‘Takemitsu Tōru no Gagaku’, p. 82

<sup>534</sup> ‘Takemitsu Tōru Kenkyū Nōto 2’, p. 51

<sup>535</sup> ‘Takemitsu Tōru Kenkyū Nōto 7’, p. 41.



to have begun with the *Requiem for Strings* in 1957, which, as has been seen in Section 1.2 above, Takemitsu perhaps intended as a memorial to Fumio Hayasaka; at the same time, paradoxically, it could also be said to have ended there as well, for with the death in 1996 of the other possible object of *déploration* of the *Requiem* – Takemitsu himself – the composer thus posthumously bequeathed the world his own memorial, to add to the list of those he had composed for others.

## 7.5 Conclusions

To seek for sources for the first type of ‘borrowing’ described above – quotation from other composers – might seem at first sight superfluous, since the citations self-evidently betray their own origin. In fact however, in at least two of the instances referred to above, there is evidence to suggest that the very act of borrowing itself may be borrowed from another composer. The composer in question is Alban Berg, whose Violin Concerto famously makes symbolic use of two borrowed melodies, a Carinthian folksong and the Bach Chorale *Es ist genug*. Takemitsu’s quotation of the Bach ‘Passion Chorale’ in *Folios* (for which he may have had some private symbolic justification of his own) and of a Catalan folksong in *Vers, l’arc-en-ciel, Palma* (of which the symbolic significance is more explicit) clearly owe much to Berg’s example. Indeed, in the latter instance there a number of points of thematic similarity between Takemitsu’s Catalan tune and Berg’s Carinthian one, as may be seen if the latter is transposed into the same key (Ex. 195): the second phrase of Berg’s theme contains both complete (A1) and partial (A2) statements of the sequence of pitches labelled A in Takemitsu’s melody, and the falling third figures at B are also strikingly similar. Further correspondences between the two works emerge if one takes into account the manner in which the two themes are harmonised: the beginning of the second bar of the Berg example is underpinned by a A♭ major/minor triad, and the harmony which appears in the strings against the first pair of repeated ‘A’s of Takemitsu’s melody includes an A♭ dominant seventh in the bass; the final pitch in the first full bar of the Takemitsu example is harmonised with a ‘panacoustic’ chord, a subset of which ([0,1,3,5,7,9]<sub>i</sub>) appears at the same transposition under the B♭ in the Berg; and two other acoustic subsets, [0,1,3,5,7,9] and [0,2,3,5,7,9] also appear in the Berg, as well as diatonic and whole-tone subsets which recall, respectively, the ‘pandiatonic’ chord at the end

(i) Takemitsu, "Vers, l'arc-en-ciel, Palma", O/2-5

The image shows two staves of musical notation in treble clef. The first staff is labeled 'A' with a bracket above it, spanning the first six measures. The second staff continues the melody and includes a bracket labeled 'B' under the last two measures, which feature a descending chromatic scale.

(ii) Berg, Violin Concerto, II, bb. 207-211 (transposed)

The image shows a single staff of musical notation in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It is divided into three sections: 'A1' (measures 1-5), 'A2' (measures 6-8, indicated by a diagonal line), and 'B' (measures 9-11, indicated by a bracket). The notation includes various note values, rests, and accidentals.

Ex. 195: Comparison between Berg, *Violin Concerto II*, bb. 207-211 (transposed) and Takemitsu, *Vers, l'arc-en-ciel, Palma*, letter O bb. 2-5

of the second full bar, and the 7-33 collection at its beginning, in the Takemitsu example.

One aspect at least of Takemitsu's tendency towards borrowing from himself

may also suggest external influence. The co-existence in the case of both *Eucalypts* and *Quatrain* of two alternative versions, one for chamber group and the other for the same combination plus orchestra, with the latter version incorporating the former intact, readily suggests comparison with Luciano Berio's practice of expanding his solo *Sequenze* into works for larger ensemble such as the *Chemins* series and *Corale*. While however there is a possibility that Takemitsu's reworkings may have been influenced in very general terms by Berio's example, on a more detailed level there are important differences between the methods of the two composers. In the first instance, Takemitsu in the two versions of *Eucalypts* appears to have worked subtractively, composing the chamber *Eucalypts II* after the version with string orchestra. Secondly however, and more significantly, Berio's reworkings are intimately linked to their solo counterparts; by amplifying the harmonic implications inherent in the original, Berio creates pitch fields which unite soloists and ensemble in a harmonically homogeneous texture. By contrast, Takemitsu's instrumental additions have, as has been seen, little or nothing in common with the solo parts to which they are added, and the resultant texture, far from being harmonically homogeneous, is another example of the multi-layered, 'pan-focal' stratification found in so many other Takemitsu works.

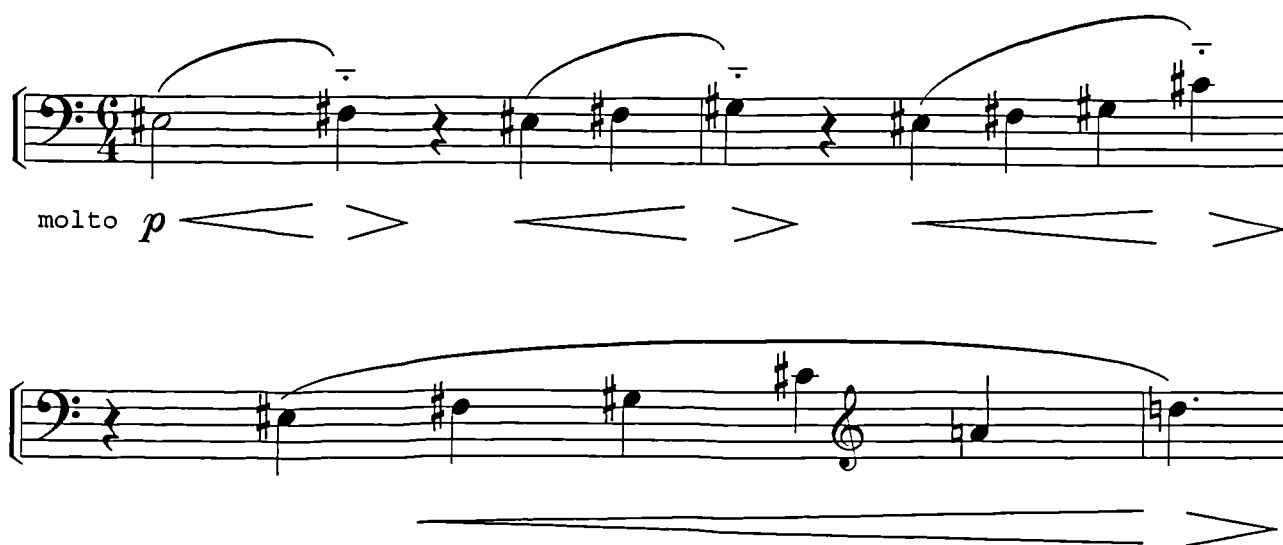
It is also possible to suggest antecedents for some of the typical Takemitsu gestures described in Section 7.3. Mention has already made of the fact that the bed-ridden Takemitsu of the post-war period spent much of his time listening to the U.S. Armed Forces Network on the radio<sup>536</sup>, and it is not impossible that the unaccompanied opening gestures of the early works described in Exx. 187-190 – especially that of *Requiem for Strings* – may owe something to that old warhorse of twentieth-century string repertoire, the *Adagio* of Samuel Barber. At the same time, such gradual emergences *out of* silence are clearly complementary counterparts to the gradual fadings *into* silence that typify Takemitsu's writing elsewhere, particularly at the ends of works; and just as in the latter instance 'the moment of waiting for sound to become silence is imbued with *ma*'<sup>537</sup>, so too is the waiting for silence to become sound in these cases.

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<sup>536</sup> See Section 1.2 above

<sup>537</sup> Koozin (1990), p. 36. Quoted above, Section 2.5

As for finding possible precursors for Takemitsu's habitual thematic expositions '*in statu nascendi*', it is possible to nominate candidates dating at least as far back as the Finale of Beethoven's First Symphony; but if one is to limit one's field of enquiry to the more realistic confines of the Twentieth Century, then the composer whose name springs most readily to mind is once again Alban Berg. It is revealing, for instance, to compare the type of thematic presentations found in Exx. 193-194 with Ex. 196, from Berg's *Chamber Concerto*. The young Takemitsu himself, it may be recalled, also wrote a Chamber Concerto (in Japanese, *Shitsunaikyōsōkyoku*) for thirteen winds, first performed at a 'Jikken Kōbo' concert in 1955.



Ex. 196: Berg, *Kammerkonzert I*, bb. 1-3 (cor anglais)

Finally, Takemitsu's various serial obsessions with a limited number of 'extra-musical' themes in much of his output constitute an aspect of his compositional practice for which it is hard to suggest any credible forerunners. One thinks perhaps of Berio's ongoing *Sequenza* project, but that is rather a matter of returning to the same exclusively musical preoccupation – solo instrumental virtuosity – than of extra-musical reference. Perhaps the most that can be affirmed with any accuracy is that the content of these 'themes' is – for the most part – very much in accord with the same predilection for 'natural' or picturesque reference exhibited by traditional Japanese music: subjects such as 'rain', 'autumn', 'trees' and

'gardens' affording obvious parallels. The very concept of such reference to extra-musical, literary or pictorial themes itself, of course, is very much in harmony with the æsthetics of Japanese traditional art: Kishibe notes that 'the dominance of literature over music is so strong' in the case of the latter that 'a good understanding of Japanese traditional music requires a knowledge of the language.'<sup>538</sup> It goes without saying that such an attitude also stands in diametric opposition to the 'abstract' aspirations of much Western art music, and indeed, the æsthetics of Western art music of the twentieth century in particular.

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<sup>538</sup> Kishibe, *op. cit.*, p. 17

## Chapter VIII

### Notation

In this, the final chapter of the investigation into Takemitsu's technical procedures that forms the second part of this thesis, the types of visual representation habitually used by the composer in the preparation of his performance materials will form the matter of discussion.

#### 8.1 Visual aspect of Takemitsu's scores

Apart from such modest experiments as the use of irregular barring and 'proportional notation' in the first and second movements of *Pause Ininterrompue*, the notation of instrumental music in the first decade or so of Takemitsu's composing career is more or less conventional. Things were to change very radically soon afterwards, however: the early 'sixties saw the emergence of a number of works wholly in 'graphic' notation which Ohtake describes as 'the ultimate manifestation of Takemitsu's aleatoric music.'<sup>539</sup> Although the four movements of *Ring* (1961) are conventionally notated – albeit without tempo, dynamics or articulation, and with permission to be played in any order – they are connected by three interludes for which Takemitsu, for the first time, provides the performers with a ring-like graphic pattern rather than a score.<sup>540</sup> The following year, in *Corona* and *Crossing*, Takemitsu expanded on this idea to produce scores entirely composed of more sophisticated versions of such circular designs,<sup>541</sup> in the execution of which he was assisted first by the graphic designer Kohei Sugiura, and then by the Italian artist Bruno Munari, who went on to collaborate with Takemitsu in the production of graphic materials for *Munari by Munari* for percussion solo (1969-72). Other works involving graphic materials continued to appear over the course of the same period: *Blue Aurora for Toshi Ichihyanagi*, an 'event musical', appeared in 1964, *Seven Hills Events*, a kind of 'happening', in 1966<sup>542</sup>, and *Seasons*, for two or four

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<sup>539</sup> Ohtake, op. cit., p. 82

<sup>540</sup> Reproduced in Ohtake, op. cit., p. 10

<sup>541</sup> A reproduction of one of these, with explanatory notes, is given in Ohtake, op. cit., pp. 82-83

<sup>542</sup> The 'score' is reproduced in Takemitsu's *Yume to Kazu* ('Dream and Number'), p. 94ff.

percussionists plus magnetic tape, in 1970.

Some of the above scores, as well as providing the basis for self-sufficient performances of the specific 'composition' *per se*, were also employed as adjuncts to the performance of fully notated compositions, providing the composer with a source of suitably chaotic, 'aleatoric' material which he tended to use for dramatic purposes. Thus in the *Accumulation II* movement of *Coral Island* the strings are instructed to use the *Corona* graphics as performance stimuli, by means of which Takemitsu is able to achieve a climactic moment of instrumental 'anarchy' at the central point of this work; while in *Your Love and the Crossing* from the *Arc* cycle of pieces the *Crossing* score is used for the solo piano and the string parts are directed 'to be played by instruction of ARC for strings.'

It will be seen from the dates of the above works that Takemitsu's experiments with this form of notation only lasted a decade or so; for him, as for most other composers of his generation, the fascination with graphics proved eventually only to be a temporary phase which, abandoned, was never to be resumed. But certain residual elements of these experiments can perhaps be detected in some of the pre-occupations of subsequent works. On the one hand, the æsthetic or philosophical premiss behind these graphically notated works – which are, in Akiyama's words, 'entrusted with the task of educating the performers' sensibilities'<sup>543</sup>, and provide a stimulus for a creative, quasi-improvisatory response – is reflected in those other contexts where a similar response is suggested not by means of visual stimuli, but verbal ones. In *Cassiopeia*, for instance, the solo percussionist is at one point given the enigmatic direction to play 'softly as Cassiopeia', which obviously appears to mean something at least to Stomu Yamashita, who, in the only recording of this work, contrives to fill the improvisatory box thus designated in the score with the same steel-pan figure when this same section is repeated later on. And after the double bar at the end of *Waves*, the performers are requested to provide the work with an improvisatory coda, in which 'all players (except for clarinet) give an imitation of the sound of the ocean; for example, waves, tide and spray, with their own instrument through the medium of snare drums for trombones and tam-tam for horn.'<sup>544</sup> Takemitsu was still making use of such verbal cues as the basis of

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<sup>543</sup> Akiyama, 'Nihon no Sakkyokutachi', p. 262

<sup>544</sup> (Referring to the percussion instruments placed on stage as sources of resonance for the brass)

improvisation as late as 1988: in one of the 'senza tempo' sections of *Tree Line*, the flautist is asked to 'counter improvisation to the strings as bird's calling, not periodical with many spaces [sic].'

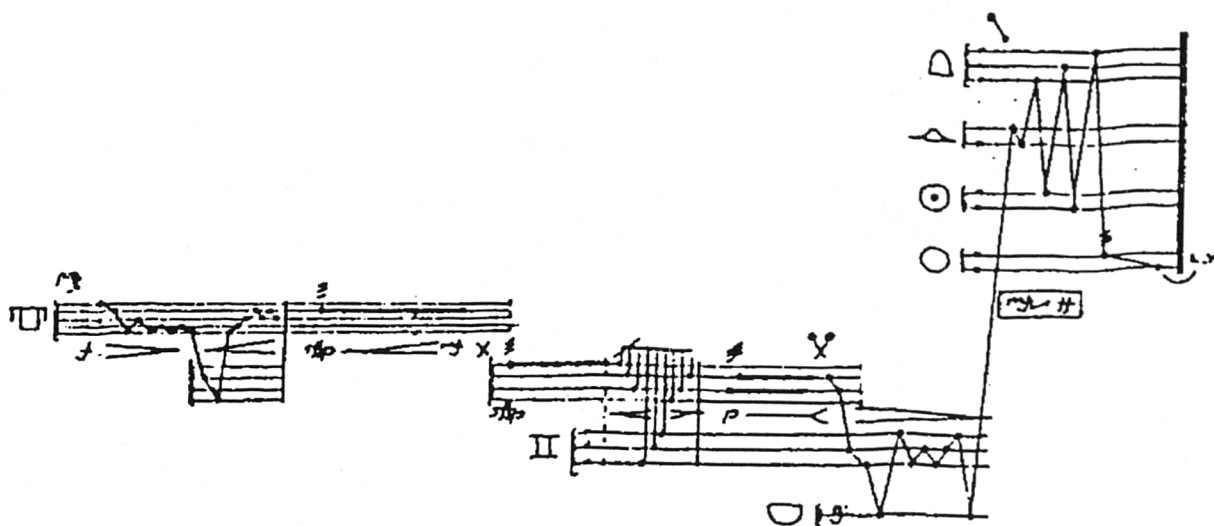
On the other hand, the care over the visual impact of the performance materials that manifested itself in so extreme a form in the graphic works might resurface in other, more conventionally notated, compositions; as if the eye that had conceived these elaborate diagrams might still be operative, but preoccupied now with the aesthetically pleasing arrangement of more conventional musical symbols – in a word, with what composers of an earlier generation would have recognised as *Augenmusik*. Two of the works from Takemitsu's 'sidereal' series, which both refer to very similar stellar configurations, may serve as examples of this. In his programme notes for *Asterism*, Takemitsu notes that this obscure word may mean not only 'a group of stars' or 'a constellation' but also, in typography, 'three asterisks (\* \* \* or \* \* \*) placed before a passage to direct attention to it.' Perhaps the abundant three-against-two patterns in this score are intended to echo the V- or Λ-shaped patterns suggested by the above printer's figures, by dividing musical space in the same proportions as are suggested by those figures. Certainly there are other passages in this same score which are incontrovertibly visually conceived, such as the symmetrical 'horseshoe' pattern created by the violin entries at Fig. D. A less equivocal translation of stellar configurations into musical notation, however, is to be found in the W- or M-shaped patterns, reflecting the arrangement of stars in the eponymous constellation, in the score of *Cassiopeia*. Ex. 197, from the solo percussion part of the same work, not only clearly makes great play with this same visual motif, but also shows that the spirit of 'graphic' notation was still to a certain extent alive and well in Takemitsu's music as late as 1971.<sup>545</sup>

Finally, the need to give performing instructions for certain extended instrumental *praxes* involved Takemitsu, like so many other composers of his generation, of necessity in one or two other notational experiments. This was particularly the case where traditional Japanese instruments were concerned. The score of *Eclipse* for *biwa* and *shakuhachi*, Takemitsu's first 'concert hall' composition for non-Western forces (1966), looks at first glance like one of his contemporaneous

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<sup>545</sup> The patterns formed from the connecting lines in Ex. 93, Section 3.1.6, may also be a reflection of this same visual pattern





Ex. 197: *Cassiopeia*, p. 21

'aleatoric' works, but in fact these symbols turn out to have more or less precise prescriptive significances. The notation for the *biwa* is essentially a kind of throwback, whether consciously or otherwise, to the 'tablature' method of transcription in lute music, in which the physical action of performance, rather than the sounding result, is the object of graphic representation; the score is thus able to reflect pitches and articulative methods quite accurately, although the rhythmic aspect of the music is much less rigidly prescribed. The *shakuhachi* notation, however, is rather less precise, consisting as it does of an upper line with symbols indicating pitch contour on a relative 'more than/less than' basis, under which are various signs relating to idiomatic instrumental effects; again, there are no rhythmic indications. Takemitsu adopts this same notation for the soloists' cadenza in *November Steps*, in which a further element of freedom is introduced by presenting the music as a number of 'sequences' that 'can be played in any order.' While such directions appear to be more than sufficient to enable the regular executants of these solo parts, Kinshi Tsuruta and Katsuya Yokoyama, to devise convincing unaccompanied cadenzas for each successive performance of the work, the relationship of performance to notation remains impenetrable to any third party, including of course the conductor of the work; and for the remaining sections of the score, those in which some minimum of co-ordination between soloists and ensemble is re-

quired, Takemitsu employs a notational system of more familiar aspect to Western readers, in which – although there are no bar-lines, and rhythmic values are ‘proportionally’ notated – pitches are given in staff notation as Western equi-tempered equivalents, with a few microtonal inflections, and some special signs for specific, idiomatic instrumental techniques.

## 8.2 Conclusions

There seems little doubt as to the ultimate origin of Takemitsu’s experiments with graphic performance materials in the ‘sixties. Ohtake summarises the situation perfectly when she describes such works as the products of the composer’s ‘Cage shock’ period<sup>546</sup>; although Takemitsu’s earliest venture into this area, the three interludes of *Ring*, actually pre-date Cage’s first visit to Japan in 1962, it will be recalled that Takemitsu had been aware of the American composer’s innovations for a long time before this – first via the writers Shūzo Takiguchi and Kuniharu Akiyama, and subsequently through Toshi Ichihyanagi, who returned from his studies with Cage in 1961.<sup>547</sup> It is particularly interesting to note that, on Cage’s own second visit to Japan in 1964, one of the works which Takemitsu heard when he travelled with him to the Sapporo Contemporary Music Festival was *Atlas Eclipticalis* (1961). This is the work which famously maps stellar configurations from an atlas of the heavens directly onto notations provided as performance materials, and it is scarcely conceivable that such an audacious plan could not have had some impact on Takemitsu’s own exploitation of astronomical phenomena as visual stimuli in *Asterism* and *Cassiopeia*, in the manner described above.

While Cage is clearly prime suspect as the source of Takemitsu’s temporary fascination with such matters, the visual appearance of the example quoted above from *Cassiopeia* (Ex. 197) might also suggest comparison with such scores as the *Zyklus* of Stockhausen (with whose music Takemitsu was certainly familiar) or even the *Treatise* of Cornelius Cardew (whose influence is rather less likely.) Certainly the kinds of performing instructions used in Takemitsu’s *Seasons* – plus and minus signs indicating, respectively, ‘accumulation’ and ‘diminution’, directions to ‘imitate what is being played by the performer in front/on the right/on the left’, etc.

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<sup>546</sup> Ohtake, op. cit., p. 75

<sup>547</sup> See above, Section 1.2

– are strongly reminiscent of the ethos behind the notation of such Stockhausen works as *Prozession*. Takemitsu's occasional use of verbal rather than visual cues as stimuli for spontaneous invention also has parallels with Stockhausen's practice in *Aus den sieben Tagen*, while the actual content of such verbal directions in Takemitsu's case, with its emphasis on imitating the sounds of nature, is of course at the same time profoundly in accord with the ethos of much Japanese traditional music. Ultimately, however, even the most cursory survey of advanced composition during this period reveals such a plethora of notational and graphic experimentation that, apart from the obvious and well-documented case of Cage, other possible sources of influence on Takemitsu's own compositional practice are so numerous as to render the selection of individual names from the vast field of potential candidates more or less arbitrary.

## **Part III**

### **Conclusions**

## Chapter IX

### Final Conclusions

#### 9.1 Generalised summary

By now a basic acquaintance with the characteristic ingredients of Takemitsu's musical vocabulary will, hopefully, have been gained from the various chapters of the preceding part of this thesis, while the conclusions intermittently drawn in that part have attempted to suggest possible external sources for the origin of such preoccupations. Consequently, one may now proceed to distil the essence of these conclusions in their turn, to draw conclusions from the conclusions, and offer a summarised view of the relative preponderance of 'Eastern' or 'Western' influences on Takemitsu's style that is suggested by these findings. The first and most obvious conclusion that can then be drawn is that the large majority of basic elements in Takemitsu's musical language are twentieth-century and Western in origin. Secondly, one notes that 'Japanese' or 'Eastern' influence on Takemitsu's music is not only in the minority, but that it is by and large confined to areas other than the fundamental *materia musica* themselves, the pitch materials of Takemitsu's music and the techniques whereby they are handled. To be sure, there are possible exceptions to this basic rule – the use of the *in* scale in *Futatsu no rento/Litany*, and much of the scale-based harmonic language of Takemitsu in general, in fact, all suggest at least the partial influence of modal traditional music, perhaps filtered through the intermediary of the Japanese 'Nationalist' school of the preceding generation. But, by and large, the 'Oriental' influences on Takemitsu's style operate not on the level of imitations of actual indigenous materials, but rather on a more abstract, ideational level, of shared æsthetic or philosophical preoccupations. Abstract Eastern influences of this sort inform such aspects of Takemitsu's music as the 'non-directed' formal processes intended as analogues to walks through Japanese gardens; the various Types of Ambiguity that have been detected on various levels of musical presentation; the fluid, non-metrical temporal sense; the exploitation of spatial relationships and theatricalisation of

musical performance; the refined use of silence as an expression of the philosophy of *ma*; and, above all, an acute sensitivity to the individual *timbre* of successive sound events, a ‘philosophy of satisfaction with a single note to be found in the traditional music of Japan.’<sup>548</sup> In sum, while the basic sound materials of Takemitsu’s musical language drew largely on a contemporary Western musical heritage, the æsthetic attitudes informing the manner in which they were presented owed rather more to Takemitsu’s own native tradition: he used ‘an international musical vocabulary to express an indigenous Japanese æsthetic goal.’<sup>549</sup>

A particularly important feature of many of the items recorded in the above list of ‘Eastern’ influences is the coincidence between these and the contemporary preoccupations of so many ‘advanced’ musicians in the West. Part of the reason for this lies in the fact that many of those same Occidental musicians were themselves turning to the East for inspiration. Such features of Takemitsu’s music as the absence of ‘goal-oriented’ structures, for instance, accord well with the philosophy of Western composers such as John Cage, with its emphasis on ‘non-intentionality’ – indeed here Takemitsu is in the fortunate position of being able to achieve more or less intuitively, as a result of his geographical and historical background, something which costs the Westerner a good deal of conscious effort, turning to his own advantage what to previous generations might have seemed a shortcoming of the tradition of Western music in Japan, its relatively late arrival on the scene of the great ‘Classical’ European tradition. To speak, however, of a ‘coincidence’ between Takemitsu’s and Cage’s ‘Eastern’ æsthetic aims, as if it were a matter of some sort of synchronistic accident, is not quite accurate, for as Takemitsu himself has admitted, it was mainly through the influence of Cage that he first became aware of the riches of his own indigenous culture – Cage, in short, becoming the agency whereby Japanese ideas were re-exported from the West back to their place of origin. This kind of ironic ‘feedback loop’ – Ohtake, quoting Takemitsu, refers to it as ‘reciprocal action’<sup>550</sup> – also interestingly appears to have been effective in determining Takemitsu’s choice of influences among composers of older generations, some of whom, ‘notably Debussy and Messiaen, have themselves been greatly

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<sup>548</sup> Takemitsu, ‘My Perception of Time in Traditional Japanese Music’, p. 12

<sup>549</sup> Koozin (1988), p. 15

<sup>550</sup> Ohtake, op. cit., p. 6

influenced by non-Western music.’<sup>551</sup> In the case of these musicians, moreover, the ‘Eastern’ influence took the form not only of abstract æsthetic concepts, as in the case of Cage, but of actual musical materials such as modal harmonies and melodic lines – the kind of concrete expressions of ‘Orientalism’ that Takemitsu had officially repudiated thus making their entry into his music via a rather circuitous route that once again seems to have required the seal of approval of the West as its legitimization.

The hankering of certain disillusioned post-war Westerners after the ‘mysterious East’ does not, however, in itself suffice to explain all the areas of overlap between the Eastern æsthetic attitudes espoused by Takemitsu and the contemporary preoccupations of so many of his Western colleagues. In some cases there really does appear to be a quite fortuitous and, for Takemitsu, fortunate coincidence: for example, the common interest in the spatial and theatrical aspects of musical performance shared by both *kabuki* on the one hand, and Berio and Stockhausen on the other. Almost certainly the most impressive and fruitful of these profound congruences between Eastern tradition and contemporary Western thinking uncovered by Takemitsu, however, was the common preoccupation of both with the mysteries of *timbre*. On the one hand, there was the acute sensitivity of the Japanese, evinced by their traditional music, to the tone-quality of individual sound events:

‘In general, it can be said that the Oriental has a deeper sensitivity to delicate timbres than has the Occidental. In the folk and traditional music of Japan there are innumerable exquisite combinations of timbre which make it possible to achieve delicate forms of musical expression without the help of other musical elements such as melody, rhythm, harmony and counterpoint.’<sup>552</sup>

This Oriental interest in timbre is paralleled, in the West, by an increasing awareness of tone-colour on the part of musicians from the latter half of the nineteenth century onwards, developing in tandem with a growing scientific understanding of the physical complexities of sound production – tendencies which converge in the post-war period with the development of electro-acoustic music

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<sup>551</sup> Koozin (1993), p. 185

<sup>552</sup> Mayuzumi, Toshirō: ‘Traditional Elements as a Creative Source for Composition.’ *Journal of International Folk Music Council* 16 (Jan. 64), pp. 38-39. Quoted in Koozin (1988), p. 43

media and the possibility of offering listeners self-sufficient discourses conducted in terms of the timbral quality of sound events alone. As the above quotation from Mayuzumi partly suggests, such a shift of focus towards the tone quality of individual, isolated sounds tends to be made at the expense of the more orthodox Western focus on the relationships between sounds considered only in terms of their conventionalised abstractions as discrete pitches – the kind of relationships implied by the terms melody, rhythm, harmony and counterpoint. Takemitsu himself has also taken note of this necessary perceptual shift; he observes, for instance, that ‘generally in [traditional Japanese] instrumental music, more importance is attached to appreciating the particular tone-quality of *koto* or *shamisen*...rather than to the combination of instrumental sounds’<sup>553</sup> and – with strong echoes of Mayuzumi – reflects that:

‘We can see that the Japanese and Western approaches to music are quite different. We speak of the essential elements in Western music – rhythm, melody and harmony. Japanese music considers the quality of sound rather than melody.’<sup>554</sup>

This corollary to a focus on the timbral evolution of single sounds – a shift of attention away from syntactical relationships between the abstracted, standardised pitches those sounds are presumed to embody – also has its counterparts in the development of Western music during this century: from the atomized fragmentation of traditional syntax in Weberian and post-Weberian *pointillisme*, through the deliberate avoidance of any intentionally imposed syntax in Cage’s chance procedures, to the wholly timbre-based arguments of certain electro-acoustic compositions – the kind of thing referred to by Dennis Smalley as ‘spectromorphology.’ There has thus emerged, fortunately for Takemitsu, a surprising degree of common ground between the aesthetic preoccupations of his own indigenous traditional music, and those of advanced contemporary musical thinking in the West – and, remarkably, by no means all the exponents of the latter have arrived at their own aesthetic positions by means of the kind of fascination with the East that Cage manifested, but on the contrary, appear to have reached similar conclusions by quite independent routes.

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<sup>553</sup> Takemitsu, transl. Kakudo and Glasow, op. cit., p. 9

<sup>554</sup> Ibid., p. 65



Furthermore, aspects of Takemitsu's philosophy of timbre can help to illuminate the contentious issue of the precise sense in which the symbiosis of Eastern and Western elements in his music may be said to achieve greater success than that attempted by Japanese musicians of a preceding generation. As has been observed, Takemitsu's imports from Japanese culture are virtually all of an abstract, ideal nature; what is conspicuously absent from his own music is precisely that Japanese import which was such an immediately striking feature of the music of his 'Nationalist' predecessors – actual Japanese modes and folk-melodies, or synthetic pastiches of the latter:

'I don't like to use Japanese tunes as material...No power...No development. Japanese tunes are like Fuji – beautiful but perfectly eternal.'<sup>555</sup>

This *lacuna* in Takemitsu's music is made especially apparent – perhaps pointedly so – by the fact that he does at the same time condescend to use popular materials from other cultures, such as the African and Catalan folk songs already referred to.<sup>556</sup> While the general consensus of critical opinion clearly seems to be that the generation of composers preceding Takemitsu 'attempted to graft Oriental elements on to Western forms with little success in creating a true synthesis'<sup>557</sup>, it might at first appear that such unsupported assessments reflect nothing more profound than the dictates of musical fashion, which has not been kind to those Nationalist composers who 'have been unable to see greater possibilities in their native idioms than merely the harmonization of Japanese tunes.'<sup>558</sup> Takemitsu's own remarks about timbre, however, can provide the starting-point for an enquiry into the grounds for such an assessment on a deeper level, one which suggests that there may be indeed be an important qualitative difference between his own efforts at East-West fusion, and those attempted by compatriots preceding him.

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<sup>555</sup> Quoted in Lieberman, Frederic: 'Contemporary Japanese Composition: its relationship to concepts of traditional Oriental musics' (M.A. Thesis, University of Hawaii, 1965), p. 143

<sup>556</sup> Furthermore, there is at least one major exception to Takemitsu's own self-confessed aversion to Japanese folk materials in the shape of the *a capella* vocal work *Uta* ('Songs'), which includes an arrangement of the hoariest potboiler in that whole repertoire, *Sakura* ('Cherry Blossoms') – virtually the unofficial second Japanese national anthem!

<sup>557</sup> Koozin (1988), p. 282

<sup>558</sup> Malm, William P.: 'Tradition and Modernization in Japanese Culture', ed. Donald H. Shively (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), p. 300

The key concept that provides the basic tool for such an analytical enquiry is Takemitsu's own distinction between what he refers to as 'portable' and 'non-portable' musics – his suggestion that...

'...music with two different faces probably has appeared in the world: one is transportable in form, the other is a music which it is impossible to move from the particular land and time in which it dwells.'<sup>559</sup>

According to Noriko Ohtake's paraphrase of Takemitsu's ideas on this matter, Western music belongs to the former category because 'it is less contiguous with the locality than non-Western music'<sup>560</sup>, whereas non-Western music 'is less likely to be accepted if carried abroad.'<sup>561</sup> Takemitsu himself provides a graphic instance of the 'non-portability' of Japanese music with his description of the New York première of *November Steps*, for which the *biwa* and *shakuhachi* players were obliged to protect their delicate instruments from the cold climate by wrapping them in lettuce leaves and wet cloths.<sup>562</sup> This anecdote suggests that Takemitsu conceived of the 'portability' of music as consisting of rather more than its acceptability or otherwise to prospective audiences, as something indeed rather like the degree to which it was able to survive transportation from the environment in which it habitually flourished. This implies, in its turn, a conception of the uniqueness of timbral colourations considerably more sophisticated than the standard Western one, a conception which takes into account not only the quantifiable physical characteristics of the sound, but also the sum of all the local environmental factors by which the listener's perception of these 'objective' timbral events may be influenced:

'Sound and its aspects vary according to a range of conditions, those of the atmosphere, its breadth, dryness, moisture, the weather, and so on...In itself the concept [of timbre] can of course be described in physical terms, but the case of timbre is an individual one, in that the abstraction of the touch or feel

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<sup>559</sup> Takemitsu, transl. Adachi and Reynolds, op. cit., p. 42

<sup>560</sup> Ohtake, op. cit., p. 52

<sup>561</sup> Ibid.

<sup>562</sup> Ibid., p. 57

of timbre as it permeates a particular climate and is refined as it passes through time is not possible.<sup>563</sup>

One aspect of traditional Japanese music which, for Takemitsu, particularly confirms its more sophisticated receptivity to the above kinds of timbral subtleties is 'the æsthetic concept of *sawari*.'<sup>564</sup> Like '*ma*', this is another of the key words of Takemitsu's æsthetic philosophy. On the one hand, it can refer to a small ivory plate placed beneath the strings on the neck of the *biwa*, 'thereby loosening the strings to create ambiguous pitches or a "noisy" sound.'<sup>565</sup> At the same time however, it can have the meaning of 'touch' or 'obstacle', and thus when a note is attacked in the above manner, 'by "touching" its surroundings, the sound absorbs nature (environment of a living sound) and the result is a complex sound which promotes *ma*.'<sup>566</sup> An inevitable consequence of such a philosophy of sound is that for Takemitsu, as for Cage, there was no strict division 'between the sounds of nature and the sounds appropriate to music'; furthermore, since Japanese æsthetic tradition regards Nature as an object to be treated with respect, so it follows that such 'natural' sounds are to be viewed 'as an element of nature to be treated with reverence.'<sup>567</sup>

By contrast, in its quest for 'portability', although Western music has developed instruments which are 'functional and easier to use, a great deal that is valuable has been cut away in the process'<sup>568</sup>, and in Takemitsu's view it is 'just those miscellaneous sounds – noises, if you will – that have been discarded during the process of modernization and functionalization in Western music'<sup>569</sup> that make the sound of an instrument such as the *biwa* so distinctive by comparison. Furthermore, in addition to this reliance upon technically more consistent instrumental mechanisms, the 'portability' of Western musical art also manifests itself in terms of the 'universality' of the medium of musical notation by means of which it is

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<sup>563</sup> 'My Perception of Time in Traditional Japanese Music', p. 9

<sup>564</sup> Ibid.

<sup>565</sup> Ohtake, op. cit., p. 56

<sup>566</sup> Ibid.

<sup>567</sup> Sleeve notes for HEAD-4; quoted in Koozin (1988), p. 58

<sup>568</sup> Takemitsu, 'Sound in the East, Sound in the West', p. 21

<sup>569</sup> Ibid., p. 23

represented: 'the art of music is systemized symbolically so that it becomes transportable, something anyone can play'<sup>570</sup>, enabling it 'to be interpreted by others who do not belong to the same culture.'<sup>571</sup> And – although Takemitsu does not appear to make the connection explicit at any point – this convergence of its content with what can be represented by the symbols of its notational system is also responsible for another property of Western music remarked upon by Takemitsu: its ability to withstand the process of 'arrangement,' of transference to other musical media. Since the essential content of Western music is to be found in the syntactical relationships between abstracted idealisations of sound phenomena, represented as notes in a score, it follows that this essence is capable of survival when those same abstracted idealisations are mediated by the timbrally quite different sound phenomena of another instrument of the same species, or even by quite different instruments:

'In the fugal technique of Johann Sebastian Bach, structure is very important. When played by any instrument, that musical structure remains essential and will not be destroyed. In my case it is quite different.'<sup>572</sup>

Quite different, because for Takemitsu the essence of music is, theoretically at least, not to be found in the artificial conceptualisations of relationships between 'notes', but in the unfathomable complexity of sound itself, which, being 'the real music in my compositions, cannot be arranged.'<sup>573</sup> And what is true for Takemitsu's own music must, by implication, be even more emphatically true for music whose essence is defined by the timbral quality of individual sounds to the extent that Takemitsu has demonstrated traditional Japanese music to be. Like Takemitsu's own music, *hōgaku* admits of no 'arrangement.' One has only to look at the transcriptions of *gagaku* music by S. Shiba, for example,<sup>574</sup> to realise how much of the essence of this music is lost when the attempt is made to translate it into Western staff notation: the score can serve as a approximate guide for the listener

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<sup>570</sup> Takemitsu, transl. Adachi and Reynolds, op. cit., loc. cit.

<sup>571</sup> Ohtake, op. cit., p. 25

<sup>572</sup> Takemitsu, transl. Kakudo and Glasow, op. cit., p. 110

<sup>573</sup> Ibid., p. 114. Once again Takemitsu's own practice contradicts his theory, for it has already been seen that he was not always averse to 'arranging' his scores for alternative media, as in the case of the orchestration of *Orion* to form the first movement of *Orion and Pleiades*.

<sup>574</sup> One of which appeared in the Japanese number of *Contemporary Music Review* (1987, Vol. 1, pp. 38-41), and is quoted in part in Ex. 131

to a performance of this music, but any attempt to ‘perform’ the score with Western instruments would only produce a laughably inadequate realisation of the original, since just about every feature that gave ‘life’ to the latter – the intonational and rhythmic inflections, and above all, the unique timbres of the instrumental sounds – cannot be accommodated within the symbols of this notational system. Takemitsu describes this loss in typically flamboyant poetic language:

‘... the subtlety of traditional music ... is not something describable through notation. On the contrary, many things would be lost if we tried to designate it systematically with symbols. If one slides down the narrow trough of description, a unique fragrance has been lost by the time one reaches the bottom.’<sup>575</sup>

These matters can perhaps be understood more clearly by reference to their linguistic parallel, an analogy which Takemitsu himself in fact appropriates repeatedly in his writings. Linguistic theory regards the actual sounds of language – the area of study of phonetics – as a matter separate from, and for the most part having no necessary connection with, the systems of semantics, grammar and syntax by means of which these sounds purvey meaning. Takemitsu, for his part, recognises in language a similar division between ‘sounds’ and ‘the meaning or context of those sounds’<sup>576</sup>, but his concept of the former includes a theoretical notion which does not appear to have any counterpart in Western linguistic theory, and for which his preferred term is the Japanese equivalent of ‘word’, *kotoba*. Just as Takemitsu’s conception of timbre elaborates upon the Western model by including not simply the physical attributes of sound phenomena themselves, but the whole complex of circumambient conditions, so his concept of *kotoba* includes not only the acoustic properties of physical speech but ‘the significance and image of life’ as contained in the complexities of that sound, which the act of enunciation transforms into reality.<sup>577</sup> For Takemitsu, however, such quasi-magical, incantatory potency of enunciation is not to be found in the complex structures of developed modern languages; one must look instead to the ‘primitive’ world, to those people who, having ‘no written language’, preserve the original intimate relationship

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<sup>575</sup> Takemitsu, transl. Adachi and Reynolds, op. cit., p. 41

<sup>576</sup> Takemitsu, transl. Kakudo and Glasow, op. cit., p. 83

<sup>577</sup> Ohtake, op. cit., p. 41

between sound and meaning.<sup>578</sup>

‘There is a beautiful harmony in such a relationship...In the languages of the Hawaiians and Polynesians, for example, meanings are changed by the different ways of breathing while speaking. Because of this the words have a wide range of delicate inflections.’<sup>579</sup>

In such non-literate cultures, ‘a meagreness in vocabulary and preciousness of each word widen the phonetic variation and complexity in meaning.’<sup>580</sup> The diametric contrast to this linguistic Eden, in Takemitsu’s mind, is of course afforded by the syntactically sophisticated written languages of the modern world – rich in informative capacity, but for that reason also impoverished in terms of the phonetic subtleties of enunciation of which they are capable:

‘With the acquisition of an alphabet, human vocabulary expands. Accordingly, the meanings of words are apt to be limited by indicative functions and thus are prone to abstraction ... But when words function denotatively, their sonority is sacrificed.’<sup>581</sup>

The predominance of written idioms, referred to by Takemitsu as ‘silent information’<sup>582</sup> is seen by him as one of the major culprits of such impoverishment: ‘If words are never uttered as sound they can never transcend their limited capacity as designators,’<sup>583</sup> he notes at one point, suggesting elsewhere that ‘Today many words are assigned to the task of naming and differentiating. Emaciated typefaces echo empty screeching sounds.’<sup>584</sup>

In linguistic terms, one might summarise Takemitsu’s position as a suggestion that the degree of sophistication achieved by a language in phonetic differentiation

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<sup>578</sup> One notes here, of course, that Takemitsu has no truck with any Saussurean notions of the ‘arbitrary nature of the sign’, but by contrast views these utterances as, in the linguistic sense of the term, deeply ‘motivated’

<sup>579</sup> Takemitsu, transl. Kakudo and Glasow, *op. cit.*, p. 83

<sup>580</sup> Ohtake, *op. cit.*, p. 40

<sup>581</sup> Takemitsu, transl. Adachi and Reynolds, *op. cit.*, p. 59

<sup>582</sup> Ohtake, *op. cit.*, p. 41

<sup>583</sup> Takemitsu, transl. Kakudo and Glasow, *op. cit.*, p. 84

<sup>584</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 18-19

is in inverse proportion to the complexity of that language's overall structural system. This in its turn may be more generally expressed as an inverse relationship between the degree of perception of subtle differences between the unique attributes of individualised phenomena, and of perception of those same phenomena as signifiers within a larger system. In this form, the insight may then be transferred to parallel situations in other media. In the realm of cinema, for instance, Takemitsu notes a similar inverse relationship between the narrative aims of the director and the visual richness of the individual scene: 'Recently the majority of filmmakers have been storytellers. And it is in the preoccupation with the story that the art of seeing things has been destroyed.'<sup>585</sup> Most significant for the present discussion, however, is of course the analysis that emerges when Takemitsu's linguistic insights are translated into a musical context. One then notes a parallel between the phonetic richness of 'primitive' languages and the timbral complexities of individual sounds in traditional, non-Western music; one also notes a similar kind of inevitable vitiation of timbral complexity as linguistic sophistication develops, and individual sounds assume more and more the rôle of mere ciphers – 'pitch-classes' – within the system of relational values which constitute the musical language:

'We touch a key and play C, which, in and of itself, doesn't have any particular significance. But we follow it with another note, then another, until, in a dialectical progression, musical expression takes form. It is more convenient for artistic expression that any one sound should hold as little meaning as possible in its own right.'<sup>586</sup>

'In brief, a sound in European music is a note in the first place – abstract, characterless with no meaning of its own. And by mutually relating these sounds – this process is referred to as composition – the sounds thus connected will become a musical line for the first time. In Japanese traditional instruments, however, a single sound in an extreme case can form a world peculiar to it by itself.'<sup>587</sup>

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<sup>585</sup> Ibid., p. 43

<sup>586</sup> Takemitsu, 'Sound in the East, Sound in the West', p. 25

<sup>587</sup> Takeda, Akimichi: 'Contemporary Music and Traditional Japanese Musical Instruments.' In: *International Conference on Japanese Studies: Report* (Tōkyō: Japan P.E.N. Club, 1974), p. 180

In Western music, 'as in modern languages, sounds are detached from their cultural and spiritual climates; only their functional phase is conceived.'<sup>588</sup> The terms used by Takemitsu here indicate that he considers the loss sustained by music in the process to consist of more than deprivation of timbral variety, of something indeed akin to a loss of that same kind of magical relationship with the world that exists in the unity of sound and sense of primitive languages; while the music belonging to people who possess the latter 'will be connected with more or less concrete matters and phenomena which seem themselves to determine the unique characteristics of the musical expression'<sup>589</sup>, the music of societies that possess alphabets 'increases its harmonic complexity, yet becomes increasingly impoverished in melodic inflection, paying no attention to the effect of silence. The end result of such a differentiation process is that a spell loses its power.'<sup>590</sup> In particular, lack of appreciation of the qualities indicated by the term *sawari*, or a 'discrimination between noise and musical sound' might eventually result in a situation, the composer fears, in which 'this "purification" will eventually dissociate music from the other elements of the universe.'<sup>591</sup>

The rôle played by standardized musical notation in this effacement of individual timbral characteristics closely parallels, of course, the rôle played by written language in the impoverishment of phonetic variation. Takemitsu's comment that 'emaciated typefaces echo empty screeching sounds' could equally, if not more aptly, be applied to the effect of Western staff notation in obliterating all trace of those characteristics that are the life blood of traditional musics. And this brings us to the crucial point to which this whole argument has been tending: that those predecessors of Takemitsu who attempted to import the actual sounds of traditional Japanese music into their own music via the intermediary of Western musical notation were, in consequence of its inadequacies, even less likely to succeed than a linguist who attempted to render the intonational complexities of Hawaiian or Polynesian languages by means of the International Phonetic Alphabet. By attempting to assimilate such manifestly 'non-portable' musics into their own works via such means, they were making the error of confounding the actual

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<sup>588</sup> Ohtake, op. cit., p. 41

<sup>589</sup> Takemitsu, transl. Adachi and Reynolds, op. cit., p. 59

<sup>590</sup> Ibid., p. 60

<sup>591</sup> Ohtake, loc. cit.



sound-substance of the music with the types of relationship that Western notation can represent, and inevitably they were doomed to enjoy only limited success as a result.

By contrast, Takemitsu's relative 'success' stemmed from the fact that he 'adopted the concepts of Japanese traditional music and succeeded in applying them in Western musical contexts'<sup>592</sup>; in particular, by re-inventing its timbral liveliness on his own terms with the tools of contemporary Western musical technique, he discovered a fortunate coincidence of interest with the most advanced schools of Western musical composition. In accord with his own linguistic laws, too, this focus upon the timbral quality of individual sounds was made at the expense of their rôles as units within a larger syntactical system; he believed that 'the task of the composer should begin with the recognition and experience of the more basic sounds themselves rather than with concern about their function'<sup>593</sup>, since 'when sounds are possessed by ideas instead of having their own identity, music suffers.'<sup>594</sup> Takemitsu's perceptual priorities here, of course, are very much in accord with those attributed above to both Japanese traditional music and certain twentieth-century Western schools of compositional thought. Implicit in such statements, too, is a certain 'hands off' attitude on the part of the composer: since timbral phenomena are much less amenable to conscious manipulation than the relationships between sounds devised by the composer, the decision to focus on the former of necessity involves a certain abdication of compositional control which, once again, accords well with certain contemporary æsthetic philosophies of the West; John Cage, for example, would have heartily ascribed to Takemitsu's dictum, already quoted, that the worst thing a composer can do is to move sounds around 'like driving an automobile.'

In conclusion, then, one may observe that the apparently unsubstantiated critical assessments of commentators such as Koozin and Malm quoted above do indeed prove, on closer analysis, to have a certain grounding in demonstrable facts; Takemitsu did in fact bring off the delicate feat of finding common ground between traditional Japanese and contemporary Western music without succumbing to the

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<sup>592</sup> Ogawa, *op. cit.*, p. 112

<sup>593</sup> Takemitsu, *transl. Kakudo and Glasow, op. cit.*, p. 80

<sup>594</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4

pitfalls that had thwarted the efforts of predecessors in this endeavour. This does not mean, however, that he did not possibly stumble upon other pitfalls in the process – accidents of gait to which Western critics in particular have not been slow to draw attention, as the next section will illuminate.

## 9.2 ‘Anti-thesis’

Before venturing to offer a final assessment of Takemitsu’s place in the musical history of Japan, it is perhaps necessary to examine some of the more frequent negative criticisms of the late composer. Two questions in particular would seem to demand an answer from any would-be apologist for Takemitsu as a significant figure in twentieth-century music; first:

- was the stylistic conversion which the composer underwent in the latter half of the ’seventies actually a desertion from the colours of high modernism in favour of an easy accommodation with a ‘classical’ musical public?

and secondly:

- are some of the main and most obvious Western influences on Takemitsu’s musical language not absorbed in such an undigested manner as to lay the composer frequently open to the charge of plagiarism?

With regard to the first of these two questions, it has to be admitted that the ‘change of direction’ undertaken by Takemitsu’s music from around the mid-’70s onwards did coincide remarkably suspiciously with his new-found rôle as purveyor of commissioned works for mainstream symphony orchestras and glossy international soloists such as John Williams or Yehudi Menuhin, and that this latter fact may not have been unconnected with his conversion to what was certainly a decidedly more ‘audience-friendly’ instrumental manner. Furthermore, as Yukiko Sawabe has suggested, the composer’s own incremental good fortune in both personal and professional life – with marriage, the birth of a daughter, and increasing international recognition – as well as the spectacular improvements in Japan’s economic situation may also have played their part in mellowing Takemitsu’s former ‘modernist’ abrasiveness: while the earlier works ‘were characterised by a sound-world rich in dissonance and intense in expression, which reflected the bitter life

of the times and the spiritual condition that accompanied it', so 'from around 1970 onwards that intense, mystical sonorous effect that had made Takemitsu famous gradually receded into the background, as if his spiritual condition were now more well-balanced and his nightmares had become a sweet dream', with the result that in his work 'ever more frequently a dreamy, romantic character permitted itself to be glimpsed'.<sup>595</sup> If such external events as these did indeed play a rôle in Takemitsu's stylistic tergiversation, then certainly by the severe standards of the die-hard *avant-gardiste* he stands indicted of deserting the field of battle on which the ongoing march of musical modernism was being played out most shamefully. At the same time, however, it would have to be admitted that most of his former '*avant-garde*' contemporaries have by now also fled from the barricades, and that indeed not a few of them did so at around the same time as Takemitsu himself. The roll-call of 'modernist' composers who have turned in some way 'revisionist' in the course of the past couple of decades exceeds even the list of former Communist countries which have performed similar U-turns: from the spectacular 'change of direction' of Penderecki to the more thoughtful re-integration of tonality in the recent music of Ligeti, there have been few composers unaffected by the changes in the recent compositional climate – even Boulez, whose rhythmically pulsing, repeated chords at the opening of *Répons* would have made their author the scourge of Darmstadt in the latter's heyday. Thus, in Narazaki's words, Takemitsu's works of the 1980's 'reflect a position which can be grasped as part of the return to tonality or to "Classical" events which was a trend among Western composers of the same period'<sup>596</sup> – a trend so widespread that in fact it would have been curiously anomalous if Takemitsu *had* continued to produce more and more works steeped in the ethos of modernist experimentation like *November Steps* or *Arc*.

It is clear from his own writings that Takemitsu was well aware of this change in his stylistic language, although, unlike Narazaki, he does not choose to characterise it as a return to 'Classicism.' His own preferred term for his later music is either 'romantic' ('My music is very romantic', as he expressed it to Boulez on one occasion<sup>597</sup>) or 'neo-romantic' ('Looking at recent trends, people are catego-

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<sup>595</sup> Sawabe, op. cit., p. 52

<sup>596</sup> Narazaki, op. cit., p. 86

<sup>597</sup> 'Roger Reynolds and Tōru Takemitsu: a conversation' *Musical Quarterly* 80/1 (Spring 1996), p. 70

rizing these things, calling them neoromanticism and so on.<sup>598</sup>) And, although he does not appear to offer a consistent *apologia* for his apparent 'regression', some of his remarks afford hints as to what he might construe as its implicit justification. Interestingly he draws the same comparison which the author made in more flippant guise above, between such artistic movements and the collapse of state Communism:

'I think that some of the trends that we see even in artistic music today, compared to for example the 1950s or the 1960s ... there seems to be a resurgence of the romantic feeling that is somewhat different from the '50s or '60s ... but if you consider what is happening in Poland or in Eastern Europe or in Berlin with the collapse of the wall ... the political and the social movements in Eastern Europe ...'<sup>599</sup>

Whereas, however, the author's own comparison was made only with a view to indicating the possible parallel operation of a 'domino effect' in both instances, Takemitsu hints here at some more profound correspondence; he feels that

'... worldwide, there is a trend for everyone – the general lay public, the nonartistic public – to want to express themselves, and perhaps artists are at the forefront ... they are triggering this ... So this is what I was trying to express by the term "romanticism", although it may not be the appropriate one.'<sup>600</sup>

In other words, Takemitsu saw both the artistic and the political movements of his time as motivated by the same *Zeitgeist*, the same groundswell of popular desire for self-expression. The nature of the constraints on personal freedom that needed to be overthrown in order to achieve this in a political sense are clearly enough implied by the above quotations; given that Takemitsu's interlocutor in these dialogues is a die-hard modernist, however, it is hardly surprising that he is rather more cautiously hesitant about suggesting what parallel constraints on self-expression might have operated in the personal, artistic sphere. Nevertheless,

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<sup>598</sup> Ibid., p. 69. In fact, Takemitsu himself could be the victim of such categorisation – a New York performance of *Far Calls. Coming, Far!* in 1983 took place under the aegis of a series organised by Jacob Druckman entitled 'New Romanticism ?'

<sup>599</sup> Ibid.

<sup>600</sup> Ibid., p. 70

it would not be too difficult a task for any observer of the development of ‘serious’ composition in the West over the course of the past few decades to fill in the blanks here, and supply suitable musical analogues, at least, for the totalitarian régimes that sparked the kinds of political reaction to which Takemitsu refers, and against which his ‘romanticism’ implicitly constitutes a similar kind of reaction.

It should also perhaps be pointed out that this adoption of a more mellifluous mode of expression on the part of Takemitsu was not a sudden conversion conveniently coinciding with his entry into the international musical establishment. As the examinations of various elements of Takemitsu’s musical language in preceding chapters have shown, many of the preoccupations of the later years – the scale-based harmonic idiom and expansive use of *melos*, for example – were not adventitious additions to Takemitsu’s musical vocabulary, but consistent developments of methods of handling material used since the very earliest period of his career. The seeds of Takemitsu’s later submersion in the ‘sea of tonality’ were thus already present in the works of the earlier years – and even more markedly so if one takes into account the unabashed tonality of some of his *U-Musik* from that period, such as the *a capella* songs of *Uta* or the film scores, in addition to the *E-Musik* that is the subject of this thesis.

In the last analysis, however, it must also be admitted that, while the above arguments might serve to exonerate Takemitsu from the charge of mere commercial opportunism, suggesting that his ‘third period’ manner was in accord both with larger historical forces and the inner imperatives of his own expressive inclination, they can do little to allay the reservations of those for whom the form which this self-expression takes is *per se* not in accordance with personal taste or æsthetic preference. Jōji Yuasa, for instance, although a former *Jikken Kōbo* member and lifelong friend of the composer, could not help voicing strong critical disapproval on this particular point:

‘Now I am going to raise the subject of one thing which I dislike in Takemitsu’s music: his “occult worship” of carnality. When *Cassiopeia* was first performed, I remember saying to Takemitsu, with reference to the type of expression given to the string instruments: “Somehow I just don’t like this sensual

stimulation of the peripheral nerves – it's like a hand carressing one's cheeks.”

<sup>601</sup>

Interestingly enough Kuniharu Akiyama uses the same kind of language to describe a work which predates Takemitsu's wholesale stylistic metamorphosis by a good few years: 'Rather more carnal eroticism', he remarks, 'can be seen in *Valeria* [than in *Sacrifice*]. This is on account of the sweetly floating melodic turns sung from time to time by the violin, which result in the loss of the transparent purity [typical of these two works]'<sup>602</sup> In the last analysis, however, such assessments reflect only subjective preferences on the part of these critics, which others might find perhaps simply over-puritanical, and do not really provide the foundation for any 'objective' evaluation of these aspects of the composer's musical style.

As for the second charge levelled against Takemitsu's works, that their *materia musica* is, especially in the case of the later scores, too obviously derivative, it is the author's experience that those who make this claim most frequently allude to Olivier Messiaen as the composer to whose music Takemitsu's bears on occasion an almost embarrassing resemblance. The reaction described below by Ryūtarō Iwata to his purchase of a CD recording of *Distance de Fée* is typical of many listeners' responses to their first exposure to certain works by Takemitsu:

'I purchased this CD together with one of music by Messiaen, and when I returned home and played the first track, it was Messiaen's music that began to sound – or so I thought. "Ah, although I wanted to play the Takemitsu, I've ended up putting on the Messiaen", I thought to myself. And when I looked closely and discovered that it actually was Takemitsu, I was completely dumbfounded.'<sup>603</sup>

In this piece, as in many others by Takemitsu, one of the chief sources of this impression is the constant use of the octatonic mode which, in the shape of the 'second mode of limited transposition,' Messiaen had of course made so much his own. Charles Mackerras once pointed out that Janáček was the only composer known to

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<sup>601</sup> Yuasa, Jōji: 'Hihanteki Takemitsuron', p. 33

<sup>602</sup> 'Nihon no sakkyokutachi', p. 260

<sup>603</sup> Iwata, Ryūtarō: *Kafe Takemitsu: watashi no Takemitsu ongaku* (Tōkyō: Kaimei Sha, 1992), pp. 53-4

him whose music consistently used the whole-tone scale and yet did not sound like Debussy; and, *mutatis mutandis*, one would like to be able to make a similar statement regarding Takemitsu, the octatonic scale and Messiaen. Sadly however, one is in all honesty unable to do so: whereas Rimsky-Korsakov, Scriabin, Stravinsky and Bartók all found ways of using octatonic materials without sounding in the least like Messiaenic forebears, Takemitsu does indeed seem unable to avoid very often sounding like one of his closest disciples. Since Takemitsu does not use the octatonic mode with anything like the rigorous consistency of Messiaen, preferring to move freely between different transpositions of the mode and other harmonic materials, one assumes that other factors must also be at work to create the impression of similarity: the typical homophonic writing with an often modal upper melodic line 'coloured' by underlying chords, for example, or the general timbral sensuousness of both composer's music. But in any case, when one delves a little deeper into the matter, it becomes apparent that although there are clearly many points of similarity between Messiaen's and Takemitsu's music<sup>604</sup>, there are also many profound differences between them. Despite his obvious spirituality, interest in Oriental musics, reverence for nature and outstanding sensitivity to harmonic and instrumental colour, Messiaen is at the same time essentially a constructivist composer, whose music involves the rigorous application of melodic, rhythmic and harmonic *schemata* to generate materials. There is a kind of geometric quality to such musical abstractions, as the title of *Liturgie de cristal* suggests: the rhythms, though fluid, are conceived in terms of arithmetical multiples of a unit pulse, and this implicit grid-like metrical background is paralleled, vertically, by the regularly spaced co-ordinates of the modes of limited transposition. Furthermore, having set in motion a process such as that begun in *Liturgie*, Messiaen is content to allow the musical mechanism to run its course without further compositional intervention. Thus, while Messiaen has often been laxly described as a 'mystic', it would be more correct to amend this definition, as Robert Sherlaw Johnson has done, to that of 'theologian'<sup>605</sup>; his encyclopædic works, with their catalogues of bird- and plain-song and the artful 'constructions' of their iso-rhythmic and -melodic cycles,

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<sup>604</sup> Such as those touched on in Koozin's comparative study (Koozin 1993)

<sup>605</sup> Sherlaw Johnson, Robert: *Messiaen* (London: Dent, 1975), p. 40. Messiaen himself, indeed, has described his own aims as the fashioning of a 'theological rainbow.' (Messiaen, Olivier: *The Technique of my Musical Language* (English edition, Paris: Leduc, 1944), p. 21)

are like the great *summæ* of the mediæval church fathers, replete with convoluted theological arguments.

By contrast, Takemitsu, although sharing many aspects of Messiaen's spiritual outlook, could not by any stretch of the imagination be described as a 'constructivist' composer. The manner in which he treats the most obvious of his borrowings from Messiaen's 'technique musicale' bears witness to this: the modes are used simply as a source of richly aromatic harmonies, without any consistent underlying rationale, and on those few occasions where Takemitsu does employ some kind of isorhythmic or isomelodic process, the predetermined mechanism is not allowed to run its course unhindered, but subjected to arbitrary modification by the composer. Furthermore, Messiaen's rhythmic system based on multiplications of a constant unit pulse is for the most part in complete contrast to Takemitsu's fluid *tactus*, 'endlessly oscillating' like the music of *nō* drama, and obscured by the frequent use of subdivisions into various uneven factors, often simultaneously. In short, while Messiaen's rich sonorities are used as fundamental units to present syntactical constructions of precise, implacable rigour, Takemitsu – as has been seen, less interested in the syntactical dimension of music than in the stuff of sound itself – uses certain of the precision mechanisms of Messiaen's musical technique only as another means of generating sonorities which he considers interesting *per se*. If Messiaen is the 'theologian', offering a commentary on his spiritual beliefs in terms of rigidly pursued and often descriptive 'arguments' of an architectural solidity, Takemitsu is instead holding up a mirror to the reality of the 'stream of sounds' in nature itself, and reflecting in consequence its ineluctable fluidity. Roland Barthes has noted a distinction between the Western theologian and the writer of Japanese *haiku* which very closely parallels the above contrast:

'Description, a Western genre, has its spiritual equivalent in contemplation, the methodical inventory of the attributive forms of the divinity or of the episodes of evangelical narrative (in Ignatius Loyola, the exercise of contemplation is essentially descriptive); the haiku, on the other hand, articulated around a metaphysics without subject and without god, corresponds to the Buddhist *mu*, to the Zen *satori*, which is not at all the illuminative descent of God, but "awakening to the fact", apprehension of the thing as event and not



as substance.<sup>606</sup>

However, when one turns one's attention to some of the other references which Takemitsu makes to Western predecessors, such as to Alban Berg or Anton Webern, it is less easy to exonerate the composer from the charge of direct imitation, particularly when those references are so specific as in the case of the similarities observed above between *Far Calls. Coming, Far!* and the Berg Violin Concerto. In instances such as these, even the most sympathetic apologist for Takemitsu finds difficulty in constructing a convincing case for the defence, and it is perhaps wiser in this instance to allow Takemitsu to appear in the capacity of his own advocate. Indeed, the arguments Takemitsu puts forward here to dismiss the charge appear to a Western observer to be so bound up with traditional Eastern attitudes of indifference to matters of originality and imitation that it would be difficult for a Westerner to propose such a defence without embarrassment:

'As a composer – not an inventor – I don't need patents. Things I think of must have been thought of by others already. That is why it is fitting that I be a composer, since I am not concerned about thinking thoughts that no-one else might ever think. I just want to make sure that while I am thinking those thoughts that anyone might think, I am doing it in my very own way. Therefore, I think I don't mind if things are not always all my own.'<sup>607</sup>

### 9.3 Synthesis

The stage has by now been reached where it becomes possible to suggest answers to the 'epic question' posed so long ago at the very beginning of this enquiry. It is to be hoped that the answers to the first part of that question – what the specific features of Takemitsu's musical style actually are – may be found in abundance in the central part of the preceding text, in the discussion of the composer's musical language in Part II; while a reply to the second part of the question – to what extent the composer's endeavours to fuse Eastern and Western elements in his music succeeded where his predecessors had failed – is suggested above in Section 9.1. There it was argued that Takemitsu's synthesis of Eastern and Western

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<sup>606</sup> Barthes, Roland, transl. Richard Howard: *Empire of Signs* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1983), p. 78

<sup>607</sup> Takemitsu, transl. Kakudo and Glasow, op. cit., p. 13

elements in his musical language, by confining the former input mainly to abstract, philosophical and æsthetic issues, avoided the error of trying to incorporate actual indigenous musical materials into his work, and that therefore the suggestion that Takemitsu achieved a form of expression which ‘transcends the hybrid styles of previous Japanese composers’ was indeed vindicated. With Takemitsu in fact, as with other composers of the post-war generation in Japan – figures such as Toshirō Mayuzumi (1929 - 1997), Toshi Ichihyanagi (1933 - ) Maki Ishii (1936 - ) and Jōji Yuasa (1929 - ) – one has the feeling for the first time that something like the ‘Holy Grail’ of East-West integration that Japanese musicians had been seeking ever since Western music arrived in their country is at last within sight; that one is at least somewhere along the way towards the hatching of Buckminster Fuller’s ‘universal egg.’ While the basis of these composers’ musical language is clearly modernist and Western, their efforts far transcend mere mimesis, yet at the same time do not fall into the trap of presenting emasculated versions of native musical materials in the manner of a kind of *chinoiserie* (or perhaps the word should be *japonaiserie*.) Neither slavishly ‘Herodian’ in its imitation of Western models, nor naïvely ‘Zealotist’ in its uncritical presentation of Eastern ones, the music of these composers for the first time offers something like a resolution, at least in musical terms, of the ‘double structure’ that has plagued the Japanese psyche from the mid-nineteenth century to the present day. One feels that one is assisting at the birth of a new confidence and maturity in the work of Japanese composers: a Coming of Age of Western music in Japan.

Perhaps the answer to the first part of the initial question, however – the part referring to the composer’s exact technical preferences – remains of necessity rather less complete than had originally been hoped for. At the beginning of the author’s researches into the technical aspects of Takemitsu’s music, it had been hoped that it might eventually be possible to offer as thorough an analytical explication of his compositional procedures as that which one might expect to deduce from the music of a Western contemporary such as Boulez or Berio. Very soon, however, it became clear that this was an aim that would never be fully realised; at a certain point in the analysis of Takemitsu’s scores, the trail seems to be lost, ambiguity and arbitrary manipulations of material conceal the traces of whatever pre-compositional strategy the composer may have originally employed, and one finds oneself ‘at the ends of the fertile land.’ Takemitsu at one point refers to

certain limitations he has discovered in the application of analytic method to the works of other composers, in terms which could equally well apply to the obstacles the analyst encounters in the confrontation with Takemitsu's own music:

'When we analyse a piece of music, we often find some mysterious element that cannot be explained. If this element is the most attractive or moving aspect of the piece, the mystery deepens.'<sup>608</sup>

In Takemitsu's own case, such impermeability to anything resembling exhaustive analysis flows as a natural consequence from the priority which, it has already been seen, he gives to the crafting of sounds as audible phenomena rather than to their subordination within some constructional scheme of the composer's; in his music, as in much traditional Japanese art in general:

'Quality traditionally resides far less in a chronological inevitability, in a dénouement, than in savouring the experience of the moment, of a moment that must be, should be, particularly *alive* in and of itself. The Japanese investment is in the complexity and substance of individual events, with a proportionately smaller commitment to their argued succession.'<sup>609</sup>

An inevitable result of this preference for the unique temporal event over the ordered structure is that Takemitsu considers his manipulative techniques not as objects in themselves intellectually stimulating, but simply as means to the achievement of an end, the actual sounding result – 'My own modes of musical thoughts follow the natural inclination of sounds. I have no pre-compositional assumptions.'<sup>610</sup> It is therefore hardly surprising that, in pursuit of this end, he should deviate from his apparent pre-compositional schemata in ways that the prospective analyst can find capricious and frustrating. It is important to remember here a point made some time ago<sup>611</sup>, namely that Takemitsu never accepted academic appointment and did not consider his listening constituency to comprise his peers in the 'new music' community in the way that one suspects many Western composers do. As a result, he did not consider the production of scores which would serve as

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<sup>608</sup> 'Soundings', p. 3

<sup>609</sup> Reynolds, Roger: 'A Jostled Silence: Contemporary Japanese Musical Thought (Part One)'. *Perspectives of New Music* XXX/1 (1992), p. 30

<sup>610</sup> Takemitsu, transl. Kakudo and Glasow, op. cit., p. 86

<sup>611</sup> See above, Section 1.2

textual documentations of his thought-processes to be an important aspect of his vocation; his music is primarily designed to be listened to rather than 'read':

'In the case of my music, there is no meaning in it if it does not have concrete figures as sounds actually created by instruments. With only the logic of written scores, sounds do not have any real physical existence as sounds.'<sup>612</sup>

Like 'the music of the Eskimo and also that of the American Indian', Takemitsu's 'acquires its meaning ... only after it is actually enunciated'<sup>613</sup>, and for this reason the composer regards written analysis of his scores as not merely irrelevant but even possibly harmful to the final perception: 'If I put explanations in a concert pamphlet, the act of understanding the music through the eyes would be emphasized, and this might ruin the act of understanding the music with the ears.'<sup>614</sup> Takemitsu, an outsider to the academic community, clearly had no interest in seeking the kind of 'intellectual' legitimation for his work based on the analysis of the written text that is so important to many of his colleagues, especially in the Western world, and it should not therefore surprise us that most of his work resists total explanation in terms of conscious manipulations of basic materials, even to the most assiduous analyst. Neither should it surprise us, of course, that for precisely this reason many critics of the composer, especially in the West, have been somewhat parsimonious in according his music legitimation of any sort.

In the light of such clear admonitions from the composer himself, then, the analyst who would attempt to offer exhaustive explanations for Takemitsu's compositional choices on grounds purely of technical exigency will inevitably be doomed to disappointment. Despite this inescapable limitation to any rigidly analytical approach, however, such a method is still able to yield sufficient results to make it a valuable exercise, as the findings presented in the second part of this thesis hopefully testify. And, by staking out that territory which *is* 'fertile land' for analysis, it also, implicitly, gives an indication of the size encompassed by that area which is not so accessible to technical elucidation. This *residuum*, which may vary in size according to the nature of the score under discussion, consisting of the composer's

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<sup>612</sup> From *Yume to Kazu* ('Dream and Number'), p. 21; translation by Taniyama, *op. cit.*, p. 90

<sup>613</sup> Takemitsu, *trnsl.* Adachi and Reynolds, p. 60

<sup>614</sup> *Yume to Kazu*, p. 6; translation by Taniyama, *op. cit.*, p. 78

free imaginative decisions and arbitrary manipulations, has intentionally not been chosen as the subject of investigation in this thesis; but one cannot quit the subject of Takemitsu's music without making the reader aware both of its presence and importance, and at least suggesting methodologies which might be appropriate for the exploration of this territory. For example an interesting approach, which could perhaps point the way for any future Takemitsu scholars interested in mapping this area, is suggested by Ting-Lien Wu in his thesis on Takemitsu's *Bryce*. This 'seventies work, like *Waves* an extremely loosely-structured essay in timbral atmospherics, is amongst Takemitsu's conventionally notated scores one of the least tractable to conventional analytic methods, as Wu himself is well aware:

'To a musician thinking only in terms of Western pitch, form and texture, *Bryce* is quite bewildering. However, if we take another approach to *Bryce* and do not pursue tonal groups as musical entities...we will discern certain characteristics deriving from the nucleus of a single tonal event.'<sup>615</sup>

This 'another approach' actually turns out to be rather ingenious: Wu takes as his starting point the notion of a single sound event as acoustically divisible into beginning, middle and end, and then argues quite convincingly that the various successive sections of *Bryce* are all based on magnifications of this single germinal microscopic gesture. Structure thus arises out of articulation; in *Bryce*, 'the hierarchical pitch structure, which is the predominant parameter of Western traditional music, is less active than Eastern articulative aspects.'<sup>616</sup> It is interesting to note here that another 'Eastern' scholar, Jeong Woo Jin, at one point suggests a rather similar approach to the analysis of *Rain Tree*, which also 'can be divided into several sections', in this case distinguished not by their articulative 'envelope' but in terms of equally 'macroscopic' features, 'textural forces and timbral metamorphosis.'<sup>617</sup> Whether such theses are ultimately entirely plausible or not depends rather on the reader's sympathies, but at all events scholars like Wu and Jin are certainly to be credited for attempting to find a way beyond the *impasse* that any analytical method developed to explain 'hierarchical pitch structures' finds itself confronted with when applied to music of this kind.

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<sup>615</sup> Wu, Ting-Lien, op. cit., p. 45

<sup>616</sup> Ibid., p. 44

<sup>617</sup> Jin, op. cit., p. 5

The statements of Takemitsu's referred to previously have made it abundantly clear that, as a composer, he was always more interested in the quality of individual sound-events themselves than in their rôle as units within a larger hierarchical order. And just as, when non-'portable' traditional musics are transcribed into Western notation, the syntactical structure of their pitch and durational relationships alone is preserved, leaving a vast amount of information unrecorded, so when Takemitsu's scores are subjected to analysis in terms of such relationships as are represented in the score there is, as has been suggested, a similar quantity of information that is left out of the reckoning. For Takemitsu, the area thus ignored is the real substance of the music; the timbral complexity of moment-to-moment events holds a mirror up to nature. The syntactical dimension of Western music is a self-contained, relativistic system, where sounds only serve to carry significance as 'pitches' (or 'durations') in relationship to one another; as such, it bears comparison with the modern Western conception of language as a system of signs defined by their opposition to other signs, not to 'things' in themselves. By contrast, a compositional attitude focussed on the ineluctable mysteries of timbre, which Takemitsu believed impenetrable to theoretical thinking, really does attempt to awaken in the listener the perception of the actual reality of phenomena, a direct awareness of the boundless complexity of real events unhindered by the distortions of conceptualisation and analysis. One recalls here a point made in Section 2.6 regarding certain types of formal patterning in Takemitsu's music, in which there is no mediation of the totality of sound-events by means of some category of overall organisation such as 'ternary', 'arch-like', etc.; the abolition of this intermediary stratum of conceptualisation offers another version, on a higher structural level, of the same attempt to remove the obstacles placed between event and perception by the act of organising the former into a distracting conceptual 'system.' And in his more effusive moments, as we have seen, Takemitsu went on to equate the kind of direct apprehension of reality which results from this focus upon the quality of individual sound events with something akin to religious Enlightenment.

This desire of Takemitsu's to focus on a clear, direct perception of sound phenomena as opposed to fascinating the rational mind with complex organisations of quantities for which those sounds act as signifiers parallels the desire for a clear, spontaneous perception of phenomena unmediated by the categorisations of language which is part of the goal of Zen Buddhism. One of the techniques of training

students in the Rinzai school of Zen involves the master or *roshi* asking the student a seemingly nonsensical question known as a *koan*. Some of these have in fact achieved a kind of cult status in the West as examples of Oriental inscrutability: the most famous, perhaps, being Chao-Chou's 'Does a dog have a Buddha nature?' or Hakuin's 'What is the sound of one hand clapping?' Part of the point of the exercise is that no logical, verbal answer is acceptable:

'He [i.e. the student] soon discovers that the *roshi* has no patience whatsoever with philosophical or other wordy answers. For the *roshi* wants to be "shown". He wants something concrete, some solid proof. The student therefore begins to produce such "specimens of reality" as lumps of rock, leaves and branches, shouts, gestures of the hands – anything and everything he can imagine. But all is resolutely rejected until the student, unable to imagine anything more, is brought to his wits' end – at which point he is of course beginning to get on the right track. He "knows that he doesn't know".'<sup>618</sup>

Attempting to 'explain' the secrets of Takemitsu's music with verbal summarisations of analytic processes, the author himself has traced a similar trajectory to that of the Zen acolyte (one could even make out a case to suggest that his references to 'Zen gardens' correspond to the latter's presentation of actual physical objects.) And at the end of the enquiry, the net result of his researches does indeed seem to be that he 'knows that he doesn't know' the whole story behind the composer's music. But, in the process of enquiring, he has at least discovered the limitations of his epistemological method, and formed a conception of the 'type of knowing' that may be necessary for himself or another commentator to venture into those areas that Western analytical approaches leave untouched. That these areas are expansive seems in little doubt; nor is there doubt that the territory is able to support sufficient fruitful spadework to keep Takemitsu scholars busy for many years to come. This, the end of author's own researches into the elements of Takemitsu's musical thinking, is in reality only the beginning of the story.

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<sup>618</sup> Watts, Alan W.: *The Way of Zen* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1962), p. 185

## Appendix A

### Works of Tōru Takemitsu

Takemitsu's compositional output, as will readily be appreciated from the following pages, was vast, and the present summary makes no claims to be exhaustive, especially since it represents the conflation of several, often conflicting, sources of material. Of these the most important have been: Schott's catalogue of the composer's works (Tōkyō: Schott Japan, 1995) and its subsequent update; Kuniharu Akiyama's list of works in *Takemitsu Tōru no Sekai*, pp. 252-266; Yōko Narazaki's worklist in the *Ongaku Geijutsu*, May 1996 number (pp. 60-73); Akiyama's biographical notes in the endpages of various volumes of Takemitsu's writings; plus odd hints found by chance in assorted literature on the composer. I am particularly grateful to Ms. Mitsuko Ono of Kunitachi College of Music, Tōkyō for supplying me with copies of materials which she is using for her own research, and look forward to reading her own worklist of the composer, on which she is currently working, when it appears in the forthcoming collaborative work *Takemitsu Tōru: Oto no Kawa no Yukue*.

#### 1. Orchestral

**Ikiru Yorokobi** (*Joie de Vivre*), ballet score for orchestra (in collaboration with Hiroyoshi Suzuki). Dur. 20' (1951)

**Ginga Tetsudō no Tabi** (*A Trip on the Galactic Railway*), ballet score for orchestra (1953)

**Requiem for String Orchestra** Dur. 10' (1957)

**Kuroi Kaiga** (*Tableau Noir/Black Painting*) for reciter and chamber orchestra (Text: Kuniharu Akiyama) Dur. 6' (1958)

**Solitude Sonore** for orchestra. Dur. 5' (1958)

**Scene** for 'cello and string orchestra. Dur. 5' (1959)



- Ki no Kyoku** (*Music of Tree(s)*) for orchestra. Dur. 9' (1961)
- Kanshō** (*Coral Island*) for soprano and orchestra (Text: Makoto Ōoka) Dur. 17' (1962)
- Ko** (*Arc*) Part I for piano and orchestra. Dur. 16' (1963-66/76)
- I. Pile** (1963)
- II. Solitude** (1966)
- III. Your love and the crossing** (1963)
- Ko** (*Arc*) Part II for piano and orchestra. Dur. 17' (1964-66/76)
- I. Textures** (1964)
- II. Reflection** (1966)
- III. Coda...Shall begin from the end** (1966)
- Chiheisen no Dōria** (*The Dorian Horizon*) for 17 strings (1966)
- November Steps** for *biwa*, *shakuhachi* and orchestra. Dur. 22' (1967)
- Green** for orchestra. Dur. 6' (1967)
- Asterism** for piano and orchestra. Dur. 11' (1967)
- Crossing** for guitar, harp, piano/celesta, vibraphone, female voices and two orchestras. Dur. 8.5' (1970)
- Eucalypts I** for flute, oboe, harp and string orchestra. Dur. 10' (1970)
- Fuyu** (*Winter*) for orchestra. Dur. 7' (1971)
- Cassiopeia** for percussion solo and orchestra. Dur. 20' (1971)
- Aki** (*Autumn*) for *biwa*, *shakuhachi* and orchestra. Dur. 18' (1973)
- Gitimalya**, 'bouquet of songs' for marimba solo and orchestra. Dur. 20' (1974)
- Quatrain** for clarinet, violin, 'cello, piano and orchestra. Dur. 17' (1975)

**Marginalia** for orchestra. Dur. 13' (1976)

**Tori wa Hoshigata no Niwa ni Oriru** (*A Flock Descends into the Pentagonal Garden*) for orchestra. Dur. 13' (1977)

**Tōi Yobigoe no Kanata e!** (*Far Calls. Coming, Far!*) for violin and orchestra. Dur. 15' (1980)

**Yume no Toki** (*Dreamtime*) for orchestra. Dur. 14' (1981)

**A Way a Lone II** for string orchestra (version of *A Way a Lone* for string quartet.) Dur. 14' (1981)

**Umi e II** (*Toward the Sea II*) for alto flute, harp and string orchestra (version of *Toward the Sea* for alto flute and guitar.) Dur. 15' (1981)

**Hoshi-Shima** (*Star-Isle*) for orchestra. Dur. 6' (1982)

**Ame zofuru** (*Rain Coming*) for chamber orchestra. Dur. 10' (1982)

**Yume no Fuchi e** (*To the Edge of Dream*) for guitar and orchestra. Dur. 13' (1983)

**Yogen**, arrangement for string orchestra of music from film *Yogen* (dir. Susumu Hani, 1982) (1983)

**Orion and Pleiades** for 'cello and orchestra. Dur. 26' (1984)

**Niji e mukatte, Paruma** (*Vers, l'arc-en-ciel, Palma*) for guitar, oboe d'amore and orchestra. Dur. 15' (1984)

**riverrun** for piano and orchestra. Dur. 14' (1984)

**Muso** (*Dream/Window*) for orchestra. Dur. 15' (1985)

**Gémeaux** for oboe, trombone, two orchestras and two conductors. Dur. 30' (1971-86)

## **I. Strophe**

## **II. Genesis**

### III. Traces

### IV. Antistrophe

**I Hear the Water Dreaming** for flute and orchestra. Dur. 11' (1987)

**Nostalghia** - In Memory of Andrei Tarkovsky - for violin and string orchestra.  
Dur. 11' (1987)

**Twill by Twilight** - In Memory of Morton Feldman - for orchestra. Dur. 12'  
(1988)

**Tree Line** for chamber orchestra. Dur. 14' (1988)

**A String around Autumn** for viola and orchestra. Dur. 23' (1989)

**Visions** for orchestra. Dur. 13' (1990)

#### I. Mystère

#### II. Les yeux clos

**My Way of Life** - In Memory of Michael Vyner - for baritone, mixed chorus  
and orchestra (Text: Ryuichi Tamura, transl. into English by Yasunari  
Takahashi). Dur. 25' (1990)

**From me flows what you call time** for five percussionists and orchestra.  
Dur. 31' (1990)

**Fantasma/Cantos** for clarinet and orchestra. Dur. 18' (1991)

**Yume no In-yō** (*Quotation of Dream – Say sea, take me! –*) for two pianos  
and orchestra. Dur. 17' (1991)

**How Slow the Wind** for orchestra. Dur. 11' (1991)

**Ceremonial – An Autumn Ode** – for *shō* and orchestra. Dur. 8' (1992)

**Keizu** (*Family Tree – Musical Verses for Young People*) for narrator and or-  
chestra (Text: Shuntaro Tanikawa). Dur. 25' (1992)

**Guntō S.** (*Archipelago S.*) for 21 players. Dur. 14' (1993)

**Fantasma/Cantos II** for trombone and orchestra. Dur. 11' (1994)

**Seirei no Niwa** (*Spirit Garden*) for orchestra. Dur. 15' (1994)

**Three Film Scores** – transcriptions for string orchestra of music from films.  
Dur. 12' (1994)

**I. Music of Training and Rest** from *Jose Torres*

**II. Funeral Music** from *Black Rain*

**III. Waltz** from *Face of Another*

**Spectral Canticle** for violin, guitar and orchestra. Dur. 20' (1995)

**Nami no Bon** for orchestra (arrangement of music originally written for TV drama). Dur. 15' (1996)

**Alone on the Pacific, Suite** for orchestra (arrangement of music originally written for film *Taiheiyō Hitoribocchi* in collaboration with Yasushi Akutagawa). Dur. 12' (1996)

**Two Cine Pastrali**: concert suite for orchestra on music from films

**1. Orin** (from *Orin/Banished*)

**2. Kaoru** (from *Izu Dancer*)

Dur. 7' (1996)

**Dodes'ka-Den** for orchestra (arrangement of music originally written for film *Dodes'ka-Den*). Dur. 5' (1996)

**Death and Resurrection** – from *Black Rain* – for string orchestra. (Arrangement of music originally written for film *Kuroi Ame*). Dur. 8.5' (1996)

**Comme la sculpture de Miro** for flute, harp and orchestra (commissioned by BBC; unfinished at composer's death)

## 2. Works for chamber ensemble

**Shitsunaikyōsōkyoku** (*Chamber Concerto*) for 13 wind instruments. Dur. 6' (1955)

**Le son calligraphie I & II** for four violins, two violas and two 'cellos. Dur. – I.: 3'; II.: 3' (1958-60)

**Landscape** for string quartet. Dur. 8' (1960)

**Le son calligraphie III** for four violins, two violas and two 'cellos. Dur. 2.5' (1960)

**Ring** for flute, terz guitar and lute. Dur. 10' (1961)

**Sacrifice** for alto flute, lute and vibraphone. Dur. 7' (1962)

**Corona II**, graphic work for strings (instrumentation flexible). In collaboration with Kōhei Sugiura. Dur. indeterminate (1962)

**Arc for strings**, graphic work, also used in *Your Love and the Crossing of Arc Part I* (instrumentation flexible.) Dur. indeterminate (1963)

**Valeria** (1965) for violin, 'cello, guitar, electric organ and two piccolos (revision of *Sonant*). Dur. 7' (1965)

**Stanza I** for guitar, piano/celesta, harp, vibraphone and female voice (Text: Ludwig Wittgenstein) Dur. 7' (1969)

**Eucalypts II** for flute, oboe and harp (solo parts from *Eucalypts I*) Dur. 8' (1971)

**Shūteiguwa** (*In an Autumn Garden*) for *gagaku* orchestra (fourth part of complete version of *In an Autumn Garden*). Dur. 16' (1973)

**Garden Rain** for brass ensemble. Dur. 10' (1974)

**Bryce** for flute, two harps and two percussionists. Dur. 12' (1976)

**Waves** (*Nami*) for clarinet, horn, two trombones and bass drum. Dur. 10'  
(1976)

**Quatrain II** for clarinet, violin, 'cello and piano (solo parts from *Quatrain*).  
Dur. 16' (1977)

**Waterways** for clarinet, violin, 'cello, piano, two harps and two vibraphones.  
Dur. 12' (1978)

**Shūteiguwa – Ichigu** (*In an Autumn Garden, complete version*) for gagaku  
orchestra. Dur. 45' (1979)

**I. Mairionjō** (*Strophe*)

**II. Fukiwatashi** (*Echo I*)

**III. Enbai** (*Melisma*)

**IV. Shūteiguwa** (*In an Autumn Garden*)

**V. Fukiwatashi Nidan** (*Echo II*)

**VI. Makadeonjō** (*Antistrophe*)

**A Way a Lone** for string quartet. Dur. 14' (1981)

**Ame no Jumon** (*Rain Spell*) for flute, clarinet, harp, piano, vibraphone.  
Dur. 10' (1982)

**Entre-temps** for oboe and string quartet. Dur. 11' (1986)

**Signals from Heaven - two antiphonal fanfares**

**Day Signal** – Signals from Heaven I – for two brass groups. Dur. 2.5'  
(1987)

**Night Signal** – Signals from heaven – for two brass groups. Dur. 3' (1987)

**Soshite, sore ga Kaze de aru koto o shitta** (*And then I knew 'twas Wind*)  
for flute, viola and harp. Dur. 13' (1992)

**Between Tides** for violin, 'cello and piano. Dur. 18' (1993)

**Aki no Uta** (*Herbstlied*) for clarinet and string quartet, transcription of a song by Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky. Dur. 4' (1993)

### 3. Instrumental Works

**Takehi** (*Conduit*) for piano (1948)

**Futatsu no Rento** (*Lento in due Movimenti*) for piano (1950.) Dur. 10' (1989)  
(see also *Litany*)

**Yōsei no Kyori** (*Distance de Fée*) for violin and piano. Dur. 8' (1951, rev. 1989)

**Saigirarenai Kyūsoku** (*Uninterrupted Rest/La Pause Ininterrompue*) for piano. Dur. 7' (1952-59)

**Sākasu nite** (*At the Circus*) for piano. Dur. 3' (1952)

**Masque I & II** for two flutes. Dur. 7' (1959)

#### 1. Continu

#### 2. Incidental I

**Masque III** (=Incidental II) for two flutes. Dur. 4' (1960)

**Piano Distance** for piano. Dur. 5.5' (1961)

**Furyō Shōnen** (*Bad Boy*) for two guitars (based on film music for *Furyō Shōnen*). Dur. 3' (1961/93)

**Corona for pianist(s)**, graphic score (in collaboration with Kōhei Sugiura)  
Dur.: indeterminate (1962)

**Crossing**, graphic work for piano(s) (in collaboration with Kōhei Sugiura).  
Dur.: indeterminate (1962)

**Eclipse** (*Shoku*) for *biwa* and *shakuhachi*. Dur. 20-23' (1966)

**Hika** for violin and piano. Dur. 5' (1966)

- Munari** by **Munari** for percussion solo. Dur.: indeterminate (1969-72)
- Cross Talk** for two bandoneons and tape. Dur. 7' (1968)
- Shiki** (*Seasons*), graphic work for four percussionists (or one percussionist and tape.) Dur.: indeterminate (1970)
- Voice** (*Koe*) for solo flute. Dur. 7' (1971)
- Stanza II** for harp and tape. Dur. 6' (1971)
- Distance** for oboe with or without *shō*. Dur. 9' (1972)
- For Away** for piano. Dur. 7' (1973)
- Tabi** (*Voyage*) for three *biwa*'s. Dur. 18' (1973)
- Folios** for solo guitar. Dur. 12' (1974)
- Le Fils des Étoiles** – Prélude du 1er Acte 'La Vocation' – for flute and harp (transcription of a solo piano work by Erik Satie.) Dur. 5' (1975)
- Twelve Songs for Guitar**, transcriptions for guitar of: *Londonderry Air* (Irish trad.); *Over the Rainbow* (Harold Arlen); *Summertime* (George Gershwin); *A Song of Early Spring* (Akira Nakada); *Amours Perdues* (Joseph Cosma); *What a Friend* (Charles C. Converse); *Secret Love* (Sammy Fain); *Here, There and Everywhere*, *Michelle*, *Hey Jude* and *Yesterday* (John Lennon and Paul McCartney); *The International* (Paul Degeyter). Dur. 42' (1977)
- Tojita Me** (*Les yeux clos*) for piano. Dur. 8' (1979)
- Umi e** (*Toward the Sea*) for alto flute and guitar. Dur. 13' (1981)
- I. Yoru** (*The Night*)
- II. Shirokujira** (*Moby Dick*)
- III. Tara Misaki** (*Cape Cod*)



- Ame no Ki** (*Rain Tree*) for three percussion players (or three keyboard players.) Dur. 12' (1981)
- Ame no Ki Sobyō** (*Rain Tree Sketch*) for piano. Dur. 3' (1982)
- Yureru Kagami no Yoake** (*Rocking Mirror Daybreak*) for violin duo. Dur. 13' (1983)
- Jūichigatsu no Kiri to Kiku no Namikata kara** (*From far beyond Chrysanthemums and November Fog*) for violin and piano. Dur. 7' (1983)
- Orion** for 'cello and piano. Dur. 12' (1984)
- Yumemiru Ame** (*Rain Dreaming*) for harpsichord. Dur. 7' (1986)
- Subete wa Hakumei no naka de** (*All in Twilight*) for guitar. Dur. 12' (1987)
- Tojita Me II** (*Les yeux clos II*) for piano. Dur. 7' (1988)
- Meguri** (*Itinerant*) – In Memory of Isamu Noguchi – for solo flute. Dur. 6' (1989)
- Umi e III** (*Toward the Sea III*) for alto flute and harp (version of *Toward the Sea* for alto flute and guitar). Dur. 12' (1989)
- Litany** – In Memory of Michael Vyner – for piano (re-composition of *Lento in due movimenti*). Dur. 10' (1950/89)
- Ame no Ki Sobyō II** (*Rain Tree Sketch II*) – In Memoriam Olivier Messiaen – for piano. Dur. 5' (1992)
- Equinox** for guitar. Dur. 5' (1993)
- Michi** (*Paths*) – In Memoriam Witold Lutosławski – for trumpet. Dur. 5' (1994)
- Tori ga Michi ni Oridekita** (*A Bird came down the Walk*) for viola accompanied by piano. Dur. 5' (1994)
- Mori no naka de** (*In the Woods*) – three pieces for guitar (1995)

1. Wainscot Pond – after a painting by Cornelia Foss

2. Rosedale

3. Muir Woods

Dur.: 1. – 4'; 2. – 4'; 3. – 5.5'

Air for flute. Dur. 7' (1995)

#### 4. Works for chorus

**Kaze no Uma** (*Wind Horse*) for mixed chorus (Text: Kuniharu Akiyama).  
Dur. 20' (1961-66)

I. Vocalise I

II. **Yubi no Jumon** (*Spell of Fingers*)

III. Vocalise II

IV. Vocalise III

V. **Shokutaku no Densetsu** (*Legend of the Dining Table*)

**Uta** (*Songs*) for mixed chorus. Dur. 1.5' – 5.5' each (1979 - 92)

**Ashita wa Hare kana, Kumori kana** (*Will Tomorrow, I Wonder, be Cloudy or Clear*), text: Tōru Takemitsu; **Chiisana Heya de** (*In a Small Room*), text: Akira Kawaji; **Chiisana Sora** (*Small Sky*), text: Tōru Takemitsu; **Koi no Kakurenbo** (*The Game of Love*), text: Shuntaro Tanikawa; **Maru to Sankaku no Uta** (*A Song of ○'s (Circles) and △'s (Triangles)*), text: Tōru Takemitsu; **Mienai Kodomo** (*Unseen Child*), text: Shuntaro Tanikawa; **Sakura** (*Cherry Blossoms*), Japanese trad.; **Sayonara**, text: Kuniharu Akiyama; **Shima e** (*To the Island*), text: Mann Izawa; **Shinda Otoko no Nokoshita Mono wa** (*All That the Man Left Behind When He Died*), text: Shuntaro Tanikawa; **Tsubasa** (*Wings*), text: Tōru Takemitsu; **Utau dake** (*I Just Sing*), text: Shuntaro Tanikawa

**Shibafu** (*Grass*) for male chorus (Text: Shuntaro Tanikawa, transl. into English by W.S. Merwin.) Dur. 5' (1982)

**Tezukuri Kotowaza** (*Handmade Proverbs – Four Pop Songs*) – for six male voices (Text: Shūzo Takiguchi, transl. into English by Kenneth Lyons.) Dur. 5' (1987)

## 5. Works for Electronic Tape and Theatre Pieces

**Relief Statique** for magnetic tape. Dur. 6.5' (1955)

**Yuridis** (*Euridice*) for magnetic tape (1956)

**Vocalism A. I** for magnetic tape. Dur. 4' (1956)

**Ki, Kū, Tori** (*Trees, Sky and Birds*) for magnetic tape (1956)

**Clap Vocalism** for magnetic tape (1956)

**Sora, Uma, soshite Shi** (*Sky, Horse and Death*) for magnetic tape. Dur. 3.5' (1958)

**Quiet Design** for magnetic tape. Dur. 8' (1960)

**Mizu no Kyoku** (*Water Music*) for magnetic tape. Dur. 10' (1960)

**Time Perspective**, theatre piece (in collaboration with Toshi Ichiyanagi and Yoshiaki Higashino). Dur.: indeterminate (1964)

**Blue Aurora for Toshi Ichiyanagi**, 'event musical.' Dur.: indeterminate (1964)

**Kwaidan** for magnetic tape, based on composer's music for film of that name. Dur. 27' (1964)

**Nanatsu no Oka no Dekigoto** (*Seven Hills Event*), theatre piece. Dur.: indeterminate (1966)

**YEARS OF EAR** ‘What is Music?’, tape montage, collaboration between Tōru Takemitsu, Shuntarō Tanikawa, Makoto Ōoka, Akimichi Takeda and Takashi Funayama (1970)

**Toward** for magnetic tape. Dur. 20’ (1970)

**Wonder World** (1972)

**Wavelengths** for two percussionists, two dancers and video installation. Dur. 27’ (1984 –)

**A Minneapolis Garden**, environmental music for tape. Dur. 15.5’ (1986)

**Seijaku no Umi** (*The Sea is Still*), environmental music for tape. Dur. 20’ (1986)

**I Left My Heart in San Francisco**, tape montage (date unknown)

## 6. Music for Stage Productions

**Natsu to Kemuri** (*Summer and Smoke*), by Tennessee Williams. Bungakuza, producer Narumi Shiro (1954)

**Yasei no Onna** (*La sauvage*), by Jean Anouilh. Shiki Theatre Company, producer Keita Asari (1955)

**Amphitorion 38** by Jean Giraudoux. Shiki Theatre Company, producer Keita Asari (1955)

**Ai no Jōken** (‘Love’s Stipulation’, version of *Eurydice*), by Jean Anouilh. Shiki Theatre Company, producer Keita Asari (1956)

**Semushi no Seijō** by Jean Anouilh (revision of *Arudēru mata wa Seijō*, = *Ardèle, ou la Marguerite*). Shiki Theatre Company (1956)

**K no Shi** (*The Death of K*), by Shuntarō Tanikawa. Bungakuza, producer Ichirō Inui (1956)

**Shusendo** (*L’avare*), by Molière. Bungakuza, producer Seiichi Yashiro (1957)

- Toroi Sensō wa okoranai darō** (*La guerre de Troie n'aura pas lieu*), by Jean Giraudoux. Shiki Theatre Company, producer Keita Asari (1957)
- Kokusen'ya** by Seiichi Yashiro. Bungakuza, producer Ichirō Inui (1958)
- Kaizoku** (*Le corsaire*), by Marcel Achard. Shiki Theatre Company, producer Keita Asari (1959)
- Ikari o komete furikaere** (*Look Back in Anger*), by John Osborne. Bungakuza, producer Koichi Kimura (1959)
- Shiseru Joō** (*La reine morte*), by Henri de Montherlant. Shiki Theatre Company, producer Keita Asari (1959)
- Ōkami ikiro Buta wa shine** (*The Wolf must live, the Pig must die*) by Shintarō Ishihara. Shiki Theatre Company, producer Keita Asari (1960)
- O Shibai wa oshimai** (*The Play is Finished*) by Shuntarō Tanikawa. Shiki Theatre Company, producer Keita Asari (1960)
- Kuro no Higeki** (*Black Tragedy*) by Seiichi Yashiro. Bungakuza, producer Hajime Sekidō (1962)
- Byakuya** (*White Night*) by Shūji Terayama. Bungakuza, producer Tetsunari Arakawa (1962)
- Karamazofu no Kyōdai** (*The Brothers Karamazov*), by Fyodor Dostoyevsky. Shiki Theatre Company, producer Keita Asari (1966)
- Ai no Megane wa Iro-garasu** (*Love Wears Tinted Glasses*), written and produced by Abe Kōbō. Seibu Theatre (1973)
- Poseidon Kamensai** (*Poseidon Mask Festival*), text Kuninari Tsuji. Shiki Theatre Company, producer Keita Asari (1974)
- Cyrano de Bergerac** by Edmond Rostand. Shiki Theatre Company, producer Keita Asari (1975)
- Nihontō – Miyairi Yukihiro no Waza** (*Japanese Swords – martial arts technique of Yukihiro Miyairi*) Yamauchi Tokio (1977)

**Shigosen no Matsuri** (*Festival of the Meridian*), Yasue Yamamoto Company (1979)

**Wings**, by Arthur L. Kopit. Seibu Theatre, producer Hideo Onchi (1982)

## 7. Music for Television and Radio Productions

**Honō** (*Flame*), radio drama by Yasushi Inoue (Shin Nihon Hōsō, 1955)

**Nihon no Monyō** (*Japanese Crest Patterns*), producer Naoya Yoshida (NHK, 1961)

**Genji Monogatari** (*The Tale of Genji*), producer Kon Ichikawa (NET, 1965)

**Minamoto Yoshitsune**, drama series, producer Naoya Yoshida (NHK, 1966)

**Denshi Gijutsu de Mirai o hiraku** (*Opening up the Future with Electronic Art*) (Tōhō, 1966)

**Onshu no kanata ni** (Mainichi Hōsō, 1967)

**Hokkaido Monogatari** (*Tales of Hokkaido*), producer Fuminao Sugihara (Yomiuri Eigasha, 1968)

**Genroku Ichidai Onna** (*A Woman of the Genroku Period*) (Asahi Hōsō, 1968)

**Toku no Ichi Shimatsuki** (*Chronicles of Toku Market*) (Asahi Hōsō, 1968)

**Aku Ichidai** (*A Villain*) (Asahi Hōsō, 1969)

**Tennō no Seiki** (*The Emperor's Era*) (Asahi Hōsō, 1971)

**Mō hitotsu no Kizu** (*One More Injury*) (NHK, 1971)

**In Motion**, musical work for sounds and images in collaboration with Kōhei Sugiura (NHK, 1972)

**Mirai e no Isan** (*Bequest to the Future*), television series, producer Naoya Yoshida (NHK, 1974)

**Fuyu no Niji** (*Winter Rainbow*) (TV Asahi, 1976)

**Chikatetsu no Alice** (*Alice of the Subway*) (NHK, 1976)

**Tōno Monogatari o yuku** (*Tales of a Distant Field*) (NHK, 1977)

**Saigō Takamori Den** (*The Legend of Takimori Saigo*) (TBS, 1977)

**Ohan** (TV Asahi, 1977)

**Aa Mujō** (*Heartlessness*) (TV Asahi, 1978)

**Rūburu Bijutsukan** (*The Louvre Art Gallery*), documentary film, scenario by Shuntarō Tanikawa (Fuji Television, 1979)

**Akō Rōshi** (*The Rōshi from Akō*) (TV Asahi, 1979)

**Ketsuzoku** (*Blood Relative*) (NHK, 1979)

**Ganjin** (Asahi Hōsō, 1980)

**Tōi Anata e** (*To You, Far Away*) (NHK, 1980)

**Yumechiyo Nikki** (*Diary of Yumechiyo*), television drama, producer Akatsuki Hayasaka (NHK, 1981)

**Tsu no Kokujin** (*Natives of the Port*) (TBS, 1981)

**The Silk Road**, video production, producer Satoshi Tanaka in collaboration with Yukinobu Shinoyama (Victor Video, 1981)

**Tōya-maru wa naze shizunda ka** (*Why did the S.S. Tōya sink?*) (TBS, 1981)

**Jobanni no Ginga** (*Giovanni's Milky Way*) (NHK, 1983)

**Maae'waina** (*Aaah, that's O.K.!*) (NHK, 1983)

**Hanasu koto wa nai** (*No Conversation*) (NHK, 1983)

**Katachi mo naku Samishi** (*Sadness without Form*) (NHK, 1983)

**Nami no Bon** (*Wave Festival*), television drama by Satoshi Kuramoto, produced by Akio Jisōji (NTV, 1983)

**Shanghai Gen-eiji** (*Shanghai Road of Apparitions*), producer Bin Iwasawa (TBS, 1983)

**Shin Yumechiyo Nikki** (*New Diary of Yumechiyo*) (NHK, 1983)

**Nijū Seiki wa Keiku suru** (*Warning of the 21st Century*), producer Naoya Yoshida (1983)

**Tsukuba Banpaku Matsushita Kan no Ongaku** (*Music for the Matsushita Pavilion at the Tsukuba Exposition*) (Tōhō, 1985)

**Osan no Koi** (*The Love of Osan*) (NHK, 1985)

**Zen no Sekai** (*The World of Zen*) (NHK, 1986)

**Kesa no Aki** (*This Morning's Autumn*) (NHK, 1987)

**Santōbi** (NHK, 1989)

**Maboroshi – Genji Monogatari Emaki** (*Apparitions – Picture Scroll of the Tale of Genji*) (NHK, 1993)



## 8. Music for Films

**Hokusai** (scenario by Shūzo Takiguchi, 1952) (Unused)

**Kurutta Kajitsu** (*Crazed Fruit/Juvenile Passions*) (Kō Nakahira, 1956.) In collaboration with Masaru Sato.

**Shu to Midori** (*Red and Green/Midnight Visitor*) (Noboru Nakamura, 1956)

**Tsuyu no Atosaki** (*The Rainy Season*) (Noboru Nakamura, 1956)

**Doshaburi** (*Cloudburst*) (Noboru Nakamura, 1957)

**Kaoyaku** (*The Country Boss*) (Noboru Nakamura, 1958)

**Haru o Matsu Hitobito** (*Waiting for Spring*) (Noboru Nakamura, 1959)

**Kiken Ryokō** (*Dangerous Trip/Vagabond Lovers*) (Noboru Nakamura, 1959)

**Itazura** (*Joking/Love Letters*) (Noboru Nakamura, 1959)

**Jose Torres** (Hiroshi Teshigahara, 1959)

**Ashita e no Seisō** (*Fully Dressed for Tomorrow*) (Noboru Nakamura, 1959)

**Nami no Tō** (*Tower of Waves*) (Noboru Nakamura, 1960)

**Kawaita Mizuumi** (*Dry Lake/Youth in Fury*) (Masahiro Shinoda, 1960)

**Mozu** (*The Shrikes*) (Minoru Shibuya, 1961)

**Furyō Shōnen** (*Bad Boys*) (Susumu Hani, 1961)

**Hannyo** (*Hannyo/Woman of Tōkyō*) (Noboru Nakamura, 1961)

**Ningen Dōbutsuen** (*Human Zoo*), animated cartoon (Yōji Kuri, 1961)

**Mitasareta Seikatsu** (*A Full Life*) (Susumu Hani, 1962)

**Karami-Ai** (*The Inheritance*) (Masaki Kobayashi, 1962)

**Otoshiana** (*The Pitfall/Cheap, Sweet and a Kid*) (Hiroshi Teshigahara, 1962)

**Namida o Shishi no Tategami ni** (*Tears in the Lion's Mane*) (Masahiro Shinoda, 1962)

**Seppuku** (*Harakiri*) (Masaki Kobayashi, 1962)

**Koto** (*Twin Sisters of Kyōto*) (Noboru Nakamura, 1963)

**Kanojo to Kare** (*She and He*) (Susumu Hani, 1963)

**Taiheiyō Hitoribocchi** (*Alone on the Pacific*) (Kon Ichikawa, 1963.) In collaboration with Yasushi Akutagawa.

**Subarashii Akujo** (*A Marvellous Kid*) (Hideo Onchi, 1963)

**Shiro to Kuro** (*White and Black*) (Hiromichi Horikawa, 1963)

**Love** (Yōji Kuri, 1963) Animated cartoon

**Kawaita Hana** (*Pale Flower*) (Masahiro Shinoda, 1964)

**Suna no Onna** (*Woman of the Dunes*) (Hiroshi Teshigahara, 1964)

**Nijū-issai no Chichi** (*21-year-old Father/Our Happiness Alone*) (Noboru Nakamura, 1964)

**Shiroi Asa** (*The White Dawn*) (Hiroshi Teshigahara, 1964)

**Ansatsu** (*The Assassin*) (Masahiro Shinoda, 1964)

**Nihon Dasshutsu** (*Nippon Escape*) (Yoshishige Yoshida, 1964) In collaboration with Masao Yagi

**Kaidan** (*Kwaidan*) (Masaki Kobayashi, 1964)

**Te o Tsunagu Kora** (*Children Hand in Hand*) (Susumu Hani, 1964)

**Nyotai** (*The Female Body*) (Hideo Onchi, 1964)

**Jidōsha Dorobō** (*The Car Thief*) (Yoshinori Wada, 1964)

**Utsukushisa to Kanashimi to** (*With Beauty and Sorrow*) (Masahiro Shinoda, 1965)

**Bwana Toshi no Uta** (*Bwana Toshi*) (Susumu Hani, 1965)  
**Saigo no Shinpan** (*Last Judgement*) (Hiromichi Horikawa, 1965)  
**Ibun Sarutobi Sasuke** (*Extraordinary Sasuke Sarutobi/Samurai Spy*) (Masahiro Shinoda, 1965)  
**Kemono-michi** (*Beast Alley*) (Eizo Sugawa, 1965)  
**Yotsuya Kaidan** (*Yotsuya Ghost Story/Illusion Island*) (Shiro Toyoda, 1965)  
**Shokei no Shima** (*Punishment Island*) (Masahiro Shinoda, 1966)  
**Ki no Kawa** (*The Kii River*) (Noboru Nakamura, 1966)  
**Tannin no Kao** (*Face of Another*) (Hiroshi Teshigahara, 1966)  
**Akogare** (*Longing/Once a Rainy Day*) (Hideo Onchi, 1966)  
**Akanegumo** (*Clouds at Sunset*) (Masahiro Shinoda, 1967)  
**Jōi-uchi** (*Rebellion*) (Masaki Kobayashi, 1967)  
**Izu no Odoriko** (*Izu Dancer*) (Hideo Onchi, 1967)  
**Midaregumo** (*Billowing Clouds/Two in the Shadow*) (Mikio Naruse, 1967)  
**Meguriai** (*The Encounter*) (Hideo Onchi, 1968)  
**Moetsukita Chizu** (*The Ruined Map/The Man without a Map*) (Hiroshi Teshigahara, 1968)  
**Nihon no Seishun** (*Hymn to a Tired Man*) (Masaki Kobayashi, 1968)  
**Kyō** (Kon Ichikawa, 1968)  
**Shinjū Ten no Amishima** (*Double Suicide*) (Masahiro Shinoda, 1969)  
**Dankon** (*The Bullet Wounded*) (Shiro Moritani, 1969)  
**Taiyō no Karyūdo** (*The Sun's Hunter*) (Hideo Onchi, 1970)

**Tōkyō Sensō Sengo Hiwa** (*The Man who left his Will on Film/He Died after the War*) (Nagisa Oshima, 1970)

**Dodes'ka-Den** (*Dodes'ka-Den*) (Akira Kurosawa, 1970)

**Yomigaeru Daichi** (*The Earth is Born Again*) (Noboru Nakamura, 1971)

**Gishiki** (*The Ceremony*) (Nagisa Oshima, 1971)

**Inochi Bō ni Furō** (*Inn of Evil*) (Masaki Kobayashi, 1971)

**Chinmoku** (*Silence*) (Masahiro Shinoda, 1971)

**Summer Soldiers** (Hiroshi Teshigahara, 1972)

**Natsu no Imōto** (*Dear Summer Sister*) (Nagisa Oshima, 1972)

**Kaseki no Mori** (*The Forest of Fossils*) (Masahiro Shinoda, 1973)

**Seigen-Ki** (*Time within Memory*) (Tōichirō Narushima, 1973)

**Himiko** (Masahiro Shinoda, 1974)

**Shiawase** (*Happiness*) (Hideo Onchi, 1974)

**Kaseki** (*Kaseki/The Fossil*) (Masaki Kobayashi, 1974)

**Sakura no Mori no Mankai no Shita** (*Under the Blossoming Cherry Tree*) (Masahiro Shinoda, 1975)

**Sabita Honō** (*Incandescent Flame*) (Masahisa Sadanaga, 1977)

**Hanare Goze Orin** (*Orin/Banished*) (Masahiro Shinoda, 1977)

**Ai no Bōrei** (*Empire of Passion*) (Nagisa Oshima, 1978)

**Moeru Aki** (*Glowing Autumn*) (Masaki Kobayashi, 1978)

**Kataku** (*House of Blaze*) (Kihachirō Kawamoto, 1979)

**Tenpyō no Iraka** (Kei Kumai, 1980)

**Minamata no Zu** (Noriaki Tsuchimoto, 1981)

**Rennyō to sono Haha** (*Rennyō, the Priest, and his Mother*) (Kihachirō Kawamoto, 1981)

**Yogen** (*Prophecy*) (Susumu Hani, 1982)

**Tōkyō Saiban** (*Tōkyō Trial/Tōkyō Verdict*) (Masaki Kobayashi, 1983)

**Antonio Gaudi** (Hiroshi Teshigahara, 1984)

**Ran** (Akira Kurosawa, 1985)

**Shokutaku no Nai Ie** (*The Empty House/House without a Table*) (Masaki Kobayashi, 1985)

**Himatsuri** (*Fire Festival*) (Mitsuo Yanagimachi, 1985)

**A.K.** (documentary film about Akira Kurosawa) (Chris Michael, 1985)

**Yari no Gonza** (*Gonza a Spear Man*) (Masahiro Shinoda, 1986)

**Hiroshima to iu Na no Shōnen** (*A Boy Named Hiroshima*) (Yoshiya Sugata, 1987)

**Arashi ga Oka** (*Onimaru*) (Yoshishige Yoshida, 1988)

**Kuroi Ame** (*Black Rain*) (Shōhei Imamura, 1989)

**Rikyū** (Hiroshi Teshigahara, 1989)

**Gō-hime** (*Basara, the Princess Goh*) (Hiroshi Teshigahara, 1991)

**Inland Sea** (1991)

**Dream Window** (John Junkerman, 1992)

**Rising Sun** (Philip Kaufman, 1993)

**Sharaku** (Masahiro Shinoda, 1995)

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— *Ongaku o Yobimasu Mono* (Awakening of Music) (Tōkyō: Shinchō Sha, 1985)

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